Gloria presses Congress OK of power bill

Story on Page A2

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Gloria hometown goes Erap

By B. Timonera
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ILIGAN CITY—This place may be President Macapagal-Arroyo's second

GLORIA/ A6

ANO? BAKA DINAYA'YAN!

Convicted child rapist is congressman again

Bilibid or not: Jalosjos wins big in Zambo

THE MAN overwhelmingly won a third and final congressional term in last week's elections though he never went out to campaign and will be unable to attend sessions in Congress.

That Romeo Jalosjos is a convicted child rapist and serving two life terms in jail did not seem to matter to his constituents in the first district of Zamboanga del Norte.

Officials of the Commission on Elections said Jalosjos, who ran under the opposition Nationalist People's Coalition identified with Eduardo Cojuangco, won soundly against an administration-endorsed rival.

Al-Harith Sali, Comelec director of Zamboanga del Norte, traveled to the National Bilibid Prison to proclaim Jalosjos the winner in rites witnessed by his friends, lawyers, staff and fellow inmates.

Jalosjos first won as congressman in 1995 but was put in prison starting in 1997 after he was convicted by Makati City Judge Roberto Diokno of twice raping an 11-year-old girl. He was sentenced to two life terms in the landmark child abuse case.

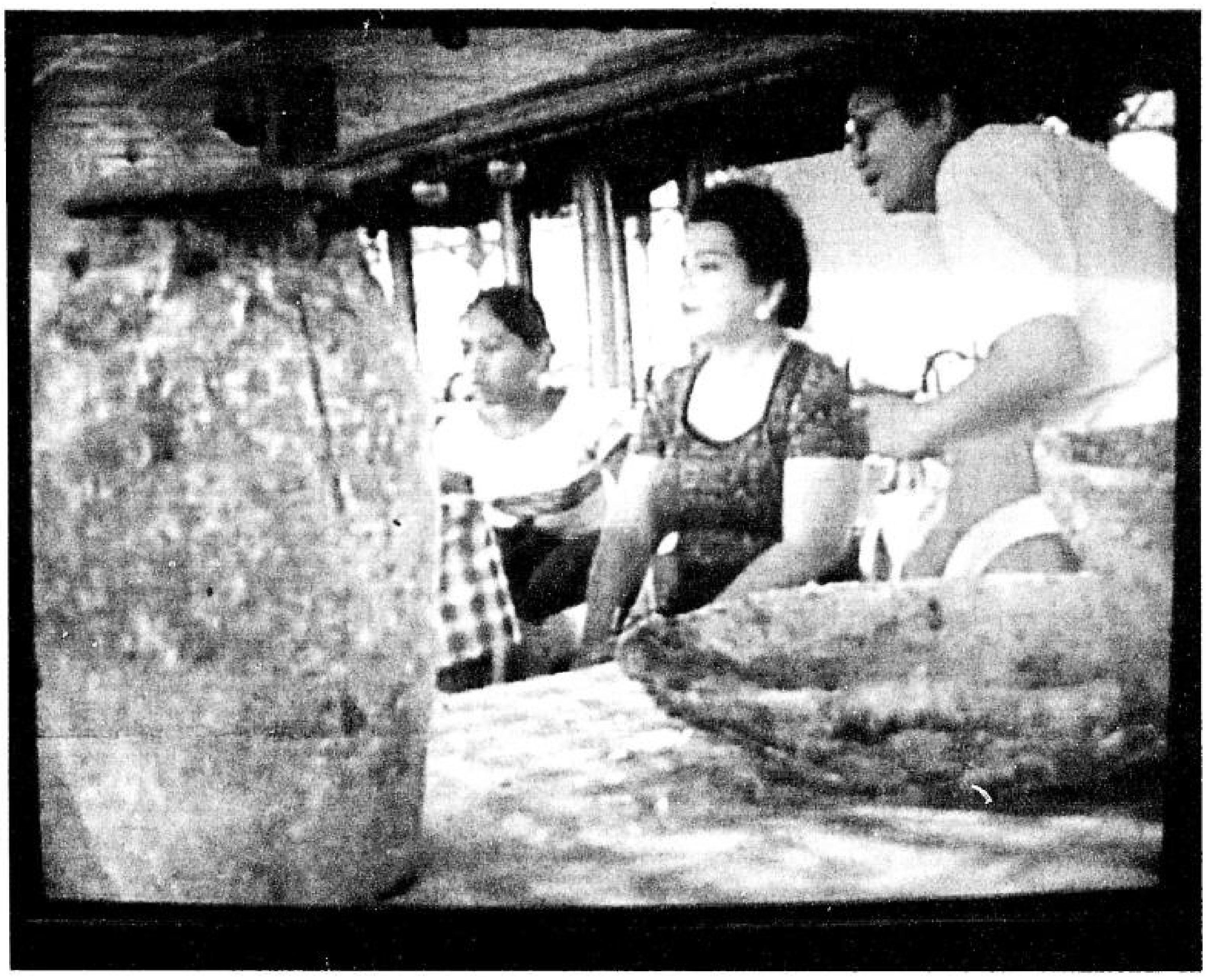
It was also the first time that an incumbent congressman was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Jalosjos was also convicted of six counts of child sexual molestation and sentenced to an additional eight to 15 years on each count.

Diokno convicted Jalosjos after the victim positively identified him as the man she spent

CONVICTED/ A20

NAMFREL			COMELEC	
As of 7:25 p.m., May 22			7 p.m., May 22	
No. of precincts: 136,283 (67.80%)			Rank	
1	DE CASTRO	10,815,952	1	6,314,878
2	FLAVIER	7,959,068	2	4,403,063
3	OSMEÑA	7,871,644	3	4,376,872
4	MAGSAYSAY	7,624,820	4	4,317,899
5	DRILON	7,614,674	6	4,222,301
6	ARROYO	7,614,535	7	4,194,222
7	VILLAR	7,481,382	5	4,282,055
8	PANGILINAN	7,381,847	8	4,157,633
9	ANGARA	7,221,687	10	3,954,070
10	LACSON	6,987,520	12	3,848,482
11	EJERCITO	6,940,385	11	3,881,535
12	RECTO	6,893,114	9	4,103,929
13	HONASAN	6,864,479	13	3,828,657
14	SANTIAGO	6,428,783	15	3,484,307
15	ENRILE	6,388,195	14	3,571,157
16	PUNO	5,976,122	16	3,092,852
17	TAÑADA	5,512,708	18	2,947,527
18	MERCADO	5,006,207	17	3,069,799
19	PAGDANGANAN	4,782,542	19	2,575,896
20	HERRERA	4,701,452	20	2,473,494
21	MONSOD	4,581,431	21	2,448,252
22	RASUL	3,433,297	23	1,711,301
23	MADRIGAL	3,363,366	24	1,694,483
24	CHATO	3,285,239	22	1,780,433
25	YASAY	3,195,816	25	1,691,391
26	CANOY	2,451,126	26	1,274,924
27	TAMANO	2,299,785	27	1,115,113
28	ADAZA	536,185	28	343,082
29	MORATO	456,163	30	207,907
30	NAVARRO	430,871	29	226,916



RUSH FOR SUNKEN TREASURE FILMGRAB

It's been a free-for-all since a fisherman revealed last month the site reportedly of a 500-year-old shipwreck where Chinese potteries abound in the waters off the coastal town of Sta. Cruz, Zambales. Ms Rosellyn Magsaysay (above), wife of Zambales Gov. Vicente Magsaysay, is the proud owner of three pieces. *(Story on Page A15.)*

Pro-GMA lawmakers seen to dominate 12th Congress

By the PDI Bureaus

THE 12TH Congress will be dominated by administration-backed representatives, which could mean smooth sailing for President Macapagal-Arroyo's legislative agenda.

An almost balanced distribution of men and women from the administration and the opposition will represent 48 congressional districts in Northern and Central Luzon, but the potential winners' altered allegiances or political affiliations do not indicate hostility to the Macapagal administration.

Of the 48 seats in Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Cordillera and Central Luzon, the pro-administration Lakas-NUCD, Liberal Party (LP) and Aksyon Demokratiko (Aksyon) appeared to be assured of at least 21 seats, and the opposition Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) and Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP), 19 seats.

Four independents won in the races in Cagayan, Pangasinan, Bataan and Zambales.

The Partido Demokratikong Sosyalista ng Pilipinas (PDSP), Reporma-Lapiang Manggagawa (Reporma-LM) and Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL) won a seat each in Abra, Benguet and Ilocos Norte, respectively.

The race for the lone district in Kalinga has yet to be decided. No result was available from the National Citizens Movement

PRO-GMA/ A20

'House arrest today, amnesty tomorrow'

By Norman Bordadora and Juliet L. Javellana

"HOUSE arrest today, amnesty tomorrow."

This was the reaction of the social arm of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines to President Macapagal-Arroyo's decision favoring house arrest for disgraced leader Joseph Estrada and even building a new jailhouse for him at a military hospital.

Groundwork on the jailhouse has already started under the supervision of Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes. The prison home will have a reception cottage for visitors.

At least seven lawyer associations and 15 nongovernment organizations also announced yesterday that they were joining the Church and militant groups in opposing Ms Macapagal's turnaround on the issue.

"The President's inconsistency regarding the issue could be a prelude to the granting of presidential pardon to her predecessor," the CBCP's National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace

HOUSE/ A6

SSS says it profited from loans

By Jerry Esplanada

IT'S TRUE. The 23-million member Social Security System borrowed P7.4-billion last year due to liquidity problems but it also made money in the process.

Horacio Templo, SSS executive vice president for operations, made the claim yesterday in an "advisory to all officials of the (pension fund's) operations group."

"SSS did not lose. It gained P260.9 million in these transactions. The SSS thus achieved two significant objectives: it helped government raise funds and in the process generated extra revenues," Templo said.

But SSS insiders did not buy Templo's story.

"We're not convinced by his explanation. The SSS borrowed

SSS/ A20

Still 8-4-1 as official tally reaches 50%

By Gerald G. Lacuarta and Cynthia D. Balana

VOTES from Negros Occidental and Pampanga, each with close to half a million votes, helped People Power Coalition candidates occupy the second to ninth positions in the official canvassing as of 7 last night.

It was still 8-4-1 in favor of the PPC after the Commission on Elections had gone over 48 out of the 102 certificates of canvass (COC). *(See figures and rankings on this page.)*

It was also 8-4-1 in favor of the PPC in the unofficial count by the National Citizens Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) as of 7:25 last night.

As the Comelec proceeds with the canvassing, Namfrel reported more cases of "*dagdag-bawas*" (vote padding and shaving) in the

STILL/ A6

'They tried to hoodwink the media'

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Armand N. Nocum

THE GOVERNOR-ELECT of Northern Samar yesterday said the video footage taken on May 17 by supporters of the People Power Coalition did not prove that election fraud had been committed in the province.

Raul Daza (LP), who was proclaimed winner the other day, said the video tape presented by PPC coordinator for Eastern Samar Emil Ong showed the actual canvassing of votes at the municipal level.

"They have turned a legal, innocuous proceeding into something sinister. They tried to hoodwink the media," Daza, a former Northern Samar congressman, told a news conference at the Club Filipino in San Juan.

Daza said the proceedings caught on camera occurred inside the San Isidro municipal hall during the canvassing of votes on the evening of May 17.

He said the footage was taken

THEY/ A19

THE PPC has turned "a legal, innocuous process into something sinister," said Northern Samar Governor-elect Raul Daza of the video footage purportedly showing fraud. DENNIS SABANGAN

Second FRONT PAGE

MORE POWER
MORE UTANG!

PAF chopper crash: Pilot error

INVESTIGATORS yesterday said pilot error caused the crash of an Air Force rescue helicopter in the outskirts of Puerto Princesa City Friday, that left seven airmen on board dead.

The rescue helicopter was carrying the bodies of six victims of an earlier helicopter crash when it tangled with the trees on takeoff and crashed.

"Initial findings pointed to human error as the cause of the crash," Air Force spokesperson Col. Lino Lapinid said.

The rescue helicopter carrying seven airmen, including five para-medics, flew to Barangay Manalo around 5 p.m. to conduct a rescue operation following the crash of a private Bell-407 helicopter in the area around 4:40 p.m.

SPECIAL SESSION

Gloria presses OK of power bill

By Ronnel Domingo
and Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday asked congressional leaders to hold a special session on May 28 to 31 to ratify the power reform bill, saying obstacles to its passage have been settled by Energy Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

Power sector reform is considered crucial for economic recovery as multilateral donors have made it a condition for granting more loans.

Investors are also anxious for the bill's approval as it would reduce overhead manufacturing costs by up to 30 percent. The Philippines has one of the highest electricity tariffs in Asia.

The President said she would also ask the special session to approve a P10.9 billion supplemental budget for government operations, including a pay increase for state workers.

Other items

Presidential Spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said other items could be taken up during the special session but the power bill and supplemental budget are the President's special concerns.

Ms Macapagal said she was optimistic that the power reform measure would be approved this time because Camacho had worked hard to settle all "substantial obstacles" to it, meeting with the authors of the proposed law and the pressure groups which had opposed it.

A special congressional session called last February failed to secure passage of the measure.

The bill's passage will be Camacho's last big assignment as energy chief. He assumes the finance portfolio on June 15, replacing Alberto Romulo who will become Executive Secretary.

Selling Napocor

The bill seeks to sell off the generating assets of the state-owned National Power Corp. to the private sector, freeing up state funds and raising competitiveness in the power generation business.

The President said she was listening to foreign investors' complaints of "uncompetitive power rates."

She said that while investors have expressed confidence in her government, "they would like to see some legislative reforms in the medium term."

The President said she was confident the government's legislative agenda would be addressed, noting that support for the administration in the incoming Congress would give her "a comfortable cushion to push worthwhile legislation."

She said she would also push for other fiscal reforms, including an overhaul of the income tax system to help plug a gaping budget deficit, the rehabilitation of the Philippine National Bank and reforms in the banking industry.

The government would also work on easing "bottlenecks to investments," providing support infrastructure to investors as well as cutting the cost of capital, she said.

She said her economic managers would meet with the business sector to discuss other obstacles to investments in preparation for her State of the Nation Address during the joint opening of the 12th Congress in late July.

"And even at this stage I can already predict some of the things we have to address. One of them is the uncompetitive power rate, that's why we have to have the power bill," she said.

Stranded costs

She said the government wants to spare consumers from the so-called "stranded costs" arising from the privatization of Napocor. Stranded costs should not be part of the consumer's electric bill, she said.

"There are many ways by which the stranded costs can be financed neither by taxes nor by the consumer paying the power bill," the President, who is an economist, said.

She said one such way would be to tap the revenues of the Malampaya natural gas project.

"If we're able to use new financing instruments to be able to frontload the use of Malampaya revenues, then that's going to be a very important way by which we can make our power cost competitive," she explained.

The Malampaya gas exploration project—jointly owned by Shell Exploration Phil., the US-based Texaco Corp. and the Phil. National Oil Co.—has a reserve of 2.6 trillion cubic feet of gas and is expected to give $9 billion in royalties to the government over the next 20 years.

Sparing the consumers

Camacho, who was an international banker before joining the government, was exploring ways to ensure Napocor's $6.7 billion in debt would not be passed on to consumers. The debt is expected to exceed the proceeds from the sale of the generating plants, estimated at $4.5 billion at best.

With a report from AFP

Gloria won't beg

By Martin Marfil

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said that she will never ever go to oil firms and beg them not to raise prices.

"I don't like the culture of the President going down to the multinationals to beg," she said. "So, if there's any conversation, it will be Secretary (Jose Isidro) Camacho."

The attitude was a far cry from that of deposed President Joseph Estrada who had several times talked to executives of oil firms asking them not to increase the oil price.

The talks had resulted in "tempered" increases spread out over several months.

Energy Secretary Camacho said that there was no impending oil price increase.

"Right now there is a distortion in the world market because of the shortage of refinery capacity in the US which has increased the price of refined products much faster than crude oil," he said.

"The major players are not jumping the gun and jumping the bandwagon with the new players. I hope that they would be mindful of their costs, the peso has not been moving very much, crude oil prices moved slightly but the forecast for crude oil prices in the coming months is favorable to us . . ." he added.

The remarks came amid reports that some small players plan to increase prices.

Major industry players are expected to follow.

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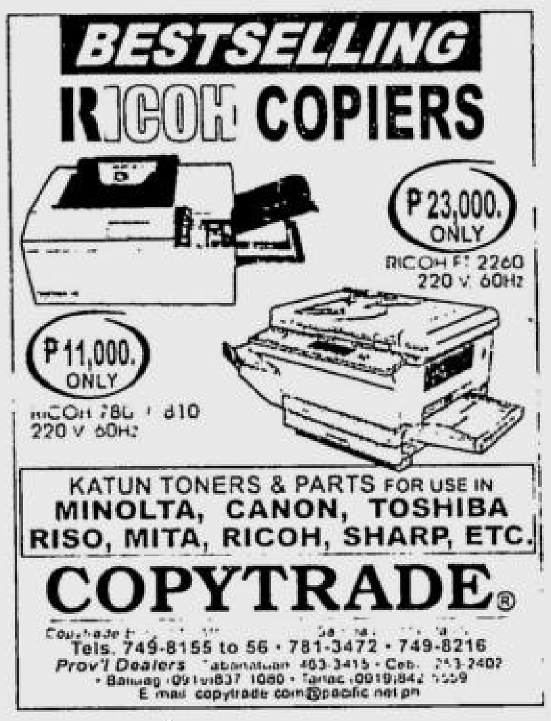
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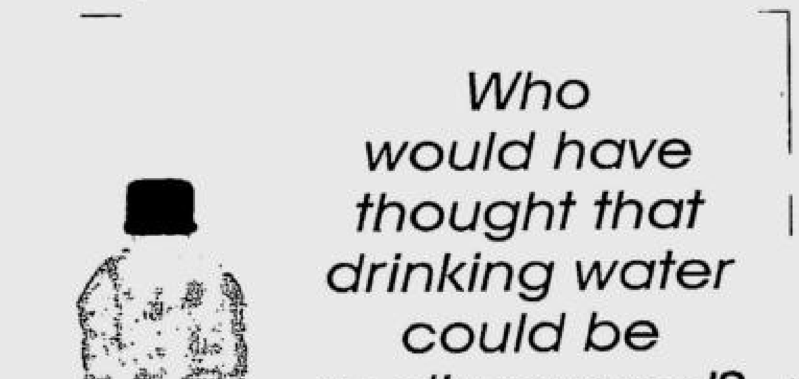
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'ON THE LOOKOUT'

Anti-coup task force still active, says AFP

By Carlito Pablo

ITS fighting men and firepower may no longer be publicly visible but the anti-coup Task Force Libra is still very much around.

Organized on April 26, a day after deposed president Joseph Estrada was arrested for plunder, its mission remains the same: protect Metro Manila, particularly the seat of political power, Malacañang.

Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, deputy chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said Task Force Libra is not about to be deactivated even with the improved security condition in the National Capital Region.

"The organization is still there, not only so visible," Cimatu told reporters. "We are always on the lookout for eventualities and we don't leave things to chance."

Cimatu, over-all commander for military security in Metro Manila, did not disclose the current troop strength of Task Force Libra.

The task force, which included contingents from various AFP services, grew to at least 3,000 at the height of the anti-government protests, which led to a mob attack on Malacañang in the early morning of May 1.

Libra commander Army Maj. Dionisio Santiago said the task force's strength has been downgraded as the security situation in Metro Manila is returning to normal.

Santiago, who is also the chief of the AFP's Special Operations Command, said only "a few hundreds" of soldiers are on standby.

"With the situation going back to normal, we have downgraded the alert level to normal and have downsized our forces in Metro Manila," Santiago said.

Task Force Libra was backed by tanks, armored fighting vehicles, Huey helicopters and MG-520 attack helicopters.

The armor contingent is no longer displayed at the parade grounds of Camp Aguinaldo where it used to be stationed during the Edsa III protests.

Only drums of aviation fuel were left on a corner of the parade grounds where two MG-520s and a pair of Hueys were deployed.

The mob attack on Malacañang prompted President Macapagal-Arroyo to declare a state of rebellion.

Ms Macapagal later lifted the order declaring a state of rebellion on May 7, a week before the congressional and local elections.

Gloria vows 'flexibility' on Ping, Gringo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday her government has some "flexibility" over the fate of two fugitive opposition candidates facing rebellion charges and who are likely to win seats in the Senate after the May 14 polls.

Critics have suggested that she drop the charges against Sen. Gregorio Honasan and former national police chief Panfilo Lacson in keeping with her pledge to "heal" the country after the bitterly-contested election.

Honasan and Lacson spent the last two weeks of the campaign in hiding after Ms Macapagal ordered a manhunt for them and several other police and military officials she accused of instigating an opposition march on Malacañang which degenerated into deadly rioting on May 1.

"We will see how good the evidence is. And of course we have to do what we have to do under the law," she told a news conference when asked if her government would still prosecute the two, projected by exit polls to be among the 13 winners in the Senate contest.

"In the case of Honasan, it's really rebellion so that's something which is more within our flexibility," she said, without elaborating.

But Ms Macapagal said the state did not call the shots on all the cases involving Lacson, who has also been implicated by private parties in kidnapping. The latter cases were "certainly not within our control," the President said.

Another opposition candidate, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, is on bail on similar charges but was not expected to be among the winners.

The official results from the elections were not expected before next week.

Four people died while more than a 100 were injured when about 50,000 Estrada supporters marched on the Palace to protest his jailing and to demand Ms Macapagal's ousting.

The government has said the siege was part of a larger plan to topple Ms Macapagal and install a civilian-military junta.

Estrada goes on trial next month for plunder, a crime punishable by death. *AFP*

Maceda heads off arraignment

By Philip C. Tubeza

FORMER ambassador Ernesto Maceda's arraignment for conspiracy to commit rebellion was postponed yesterday at the Quezon City Regional Trial Court after his lawyers asked for a copy of the video tape allegedly showing Maceda inciting the crowd.

Branch 104 Judge Thelma A. Ponferrada granted Maceda's petition to have the arraignment deferred indefinitely until the defense panel gets a copy of the video tape.

Lawyer Alfredo Lazaro Jr. represented Maceda during the scheduled arraignment at Ponferrada's sala around 2 p.m. yesterday. The accused was absent yesterday because of his erratic blood pressure.

Lazaro said the defense lawyers are asking for a copy of the tape so that they could decide what is the next proper legal step to take.

"It would provide us with clear view about all the legal remedies at hand. We could then ask either for the arraignment, for the court to quash the case, or to ask for a reinvestigation," Lazaro told reporters.

The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group recorded Maceda's alleged rebellious statements aired over the Iglesia ni Cristo-owned TV station Net25 from April 26 to April 30.

Maceda allegedly made the rebellious statements during the mammoth pro-Estada gathering at the Edsa Shrine.

Lazaro admitted that his client was present at the shrine during the gathering but he denied that Maceda uttered anything that was rebellious.

"He was there but he only introduced the (Pwersa ng Masa) senatorial candidates," he said.

Besides the video tape, the prosecution is also planning to present at least five witnesses, including a National Bureau of Investigation agent and three policemen.

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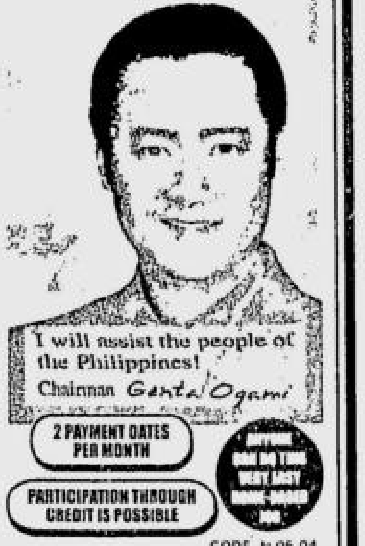

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Yorac to head PCGG

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said she has asked Haydee Yorac, former commissioner of the Commission on Elections, to assume as the new chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government.

The President, in a press conference at the Heroes' Hall, said Yorac might take the chairmanship after the senatorial winners are proclaimed.

She said Yorac has still to wind up her affairs with the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), of which she is an official.

The President also said that "informally" Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo is now taking on the job of Executive Secretary.

She explained that Energy Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho would soon take the finance portfolio but would not just transfer yet.

"The authors of the Power (Sector Reform) bill are so happy with the performance of Secretary Camacho that they don't want him to leave the department until they see a clone of Camacho," the President said.

Gloria confident she'll have control of Senate

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is confident that the expected victory of eight candidates from the administration coalition, bolstered by four incumbent Lakas senators and two former Estrada allies would give her a comfortable majority in the Senate to push her legislative agenda.

The President disclosed yesterday that she would be able to count on the support of Senators Ramon Revilla, Robert Jaworski and John Osmeña, hitherto identified with the bloc supporting imprisoned ex-president Joseph Estrada.

She said the three, who now profess to be independent, have told her they would support her administration.

Three Lakas senators already in the Senate—Rene Cayetano, Loren Legarda and Robert Barbers—are government supporters, the President said at yesterday's press conference, the first that she has called after last week's elections.

Magic member

Analysts have said the administration's People Power Coalition had to win at least nine of the contested Senate seats to secure an undisputed majority in the legislature and ensure the passage of key economic reform measures.

Ms Macapagal said she did not see the apparent victory of some opposition candidates in the senatorial race as a repudiation of her administration.

"We have the majority, how do you call that a repudiation?" she asked. "We respect the will of the people and we are happy enough with the majority."

Nor was she worried about the entry into the Senate of Estrada's wife, Luisa Ejercito, who is among the opposition candidates leading in the incomplete vote count.

"It's the will of the people, we respect the will of the people," she said.

Not thinking of 2004

Asked if she thought Ejercito might pose a threat in the 2004 presidential race, the President said: "I'm not even thinking of 2004 at this point. I'm just thinking of doing what is right in governance."

"Because if you govern thinking of the next elections, you will not govern well," she added, eliciting applause from the audience.

The President said she was happy that "eight of my candidates were deemed worthy by the people" but that it was time to "move forward and not have any gloating."

But though she was happy about the likely victory of her coalition, she also called for reforms in the electoral process and a "new revolution against guns, goons and gold."

She said the slow count of the votes cast in the May 14 elections had dampened investor interest in the stock market.

Ms Macapagal said the victory of eight PPC candidates, plus the three Lakas incumbents and Revilla who, she said, has assured her that he was "keeping his status as a Lakas (member)," would give her administration 12 supportive senators.

Big J

"And I have asked him (Revilla) whether Sen. (Robert) Jaworski also feels the same way and he said yes," she said.

The President said she had also spoken with Sen John Osmeña "and he said he and the Alayon (his local party) will be supporting this administration."

"So I think we have a comfortable cushion to push worthwhile legislation," the President said.

She said the legislation being proposed has to be worthwhile or "I will not even be able to count on (the support of) my own candidates," she said.

"You must remember that in the Senate, every senator is independent. So we really have 24 independent republics. Whether they are party mates, we have to convince each one of them about the rightness of every piece of legislation," the President said.

Revilla, Jaworski and Osmeña were among the 11 senators who voted against the disclosure of crucial evidence, which aborted Estrada's impeachment trial.

Revilla and Jaworski quit Estrada's Lapian ng Masang Pilipino before the impeachment trial. Revilla formally joined Lakas in January while Jaworski, his son-in-law, chose to be partyless. His final break with Estrada came when his son Bong Revilla lost the governorship of Cavite to a candidate supported by the former president.

Osmeña, who used to be one of Estrada's staunchest allies, has been issuing statements that he was keeping a "neutral" stance. His party, the Nationalist People's Coalition, severed its alliance with Estrada's coalition after Ms Macapagal assumed the presidency.

With reports from Martin P. Marfil and Reuters

4 vying for Senate top post

By Christine Avendaño

A FOUR-cornered fight for the Senate presidency may be in the offing.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Senators Franklin Drilon and Renato Cayetano, as well as incoming Sen. Edgardo Angara have emerged as contenders to the Senate leadership, at least according to their colleagues.

Pimentel, in a statement, allayed fears that the legislative program of President Macapagal-Arroyo would be endangered in the event the pro-administration People Power Coalition gets only seven or eight seats in the Senate.

Pimentel said he believes that all senators will cross party lines to support the President's "meritorious" legislative proposals.

"Whether they are in the majority or minority, the senators will vote favorably on any proposal that is good for the country," he said. "I don't see anybody being an obstructionist in the Senate."

The Senate president said the administration stands to have 12 senators in the new Congress in the event 8 PPC bets make it.

At present, there are four Lakas senators—Cayetano, Loren Legarda, Robert Barbers and Ramon Revilla Sr.

This, he said, "may result in a stalemate unless the PPC can forge an alliance with other senators."

He said that any group that gets 13 or more senators would have the right to revamp the Senate leadership, from the Senate presidency to the committee chairmanships.

But Pimentel stressed that "for the moment, no single party has solidified 13 or more seats in the Senate, so anything can still happen."

This was the same impression made by Legarda as well as opposition senators Rodolfo Biazon and Vicente Sotto III, of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, who said the outcome of the senatorial race has yet to be completed.

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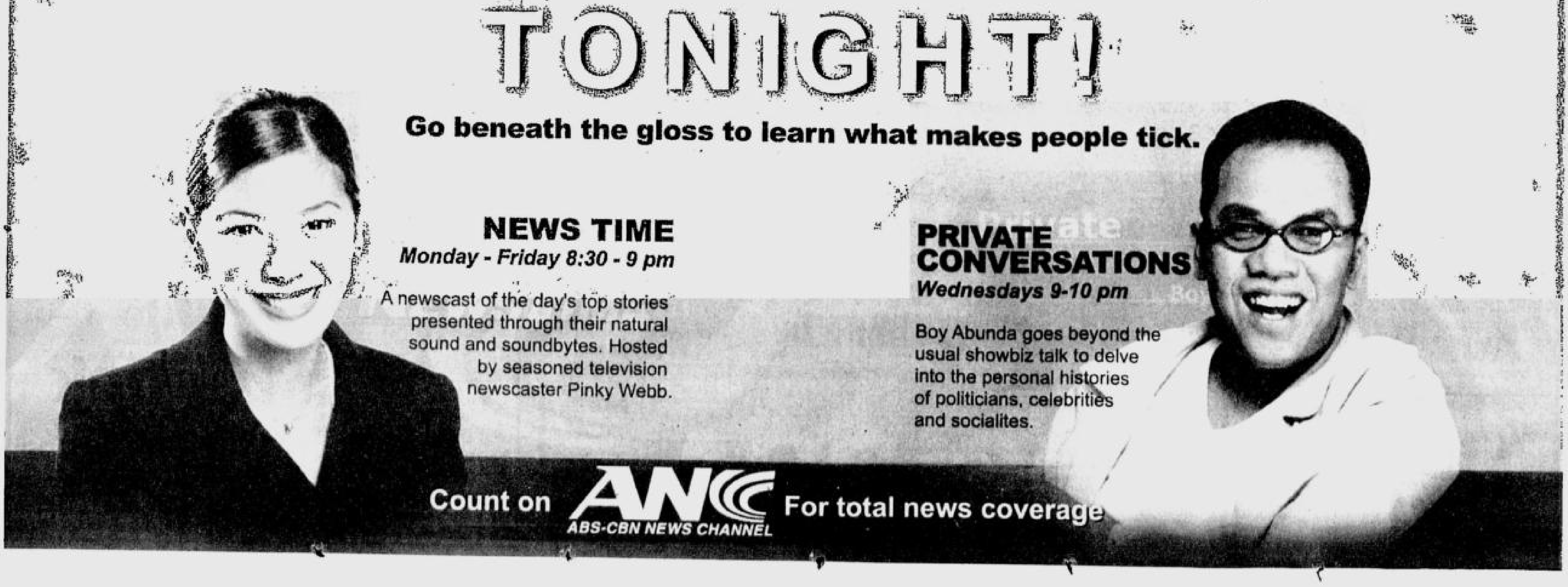
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Bird flu: Nothing to worry about

UNLESS you are born with wings and feathers, you have nothing to fear of the ongoing "bird flu" scare in the Southeast Asian region.

Unlike the 1997 bird flu virus, which killed six people in Hongkong, the new strain of H5N1 avian influenza virus does not affect humans as it is genetically different, according to the Bureau of Animal Industry through a Department of Health press statement.

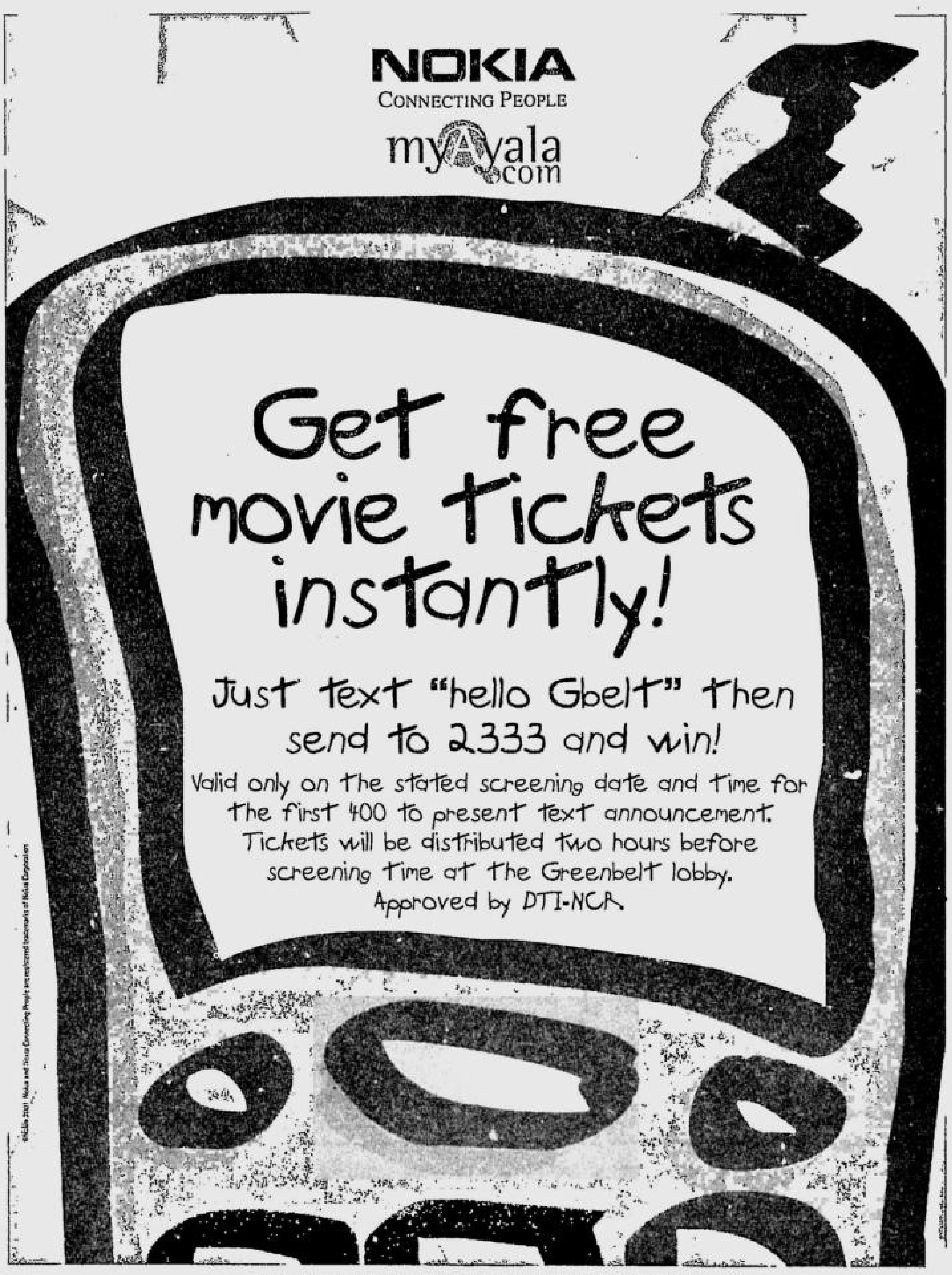
In addition, no new infections have been detected among humans in Hongkong.

However, the DoH, through its Bureau of Quarantine and International Surveillance, in coordination with the BAI is also closely monitoring all air and sea ports to prevent the entry of contaminated birds.

Furthermore, the DoH is extending its influenza virus surveillance to include passengers and crew of ships docking at the North Harbor, particularly those from China and Hongkong, where the bird flu virus is at its most destructive.

Bird flu, an acute viral disease of the respiratory tract characterized by fever, muscle pains, sore throat, cough and colds, is caused by an avian type of influenza virus which normally affects fowls, such as chicken and quails.

However, some strains of the virus could also affect humans, as was the case in 1997 when six people were killed and a few others were reported ill, mostly children in Hongkong and China.



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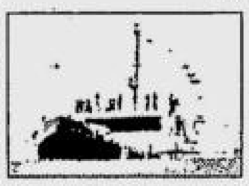

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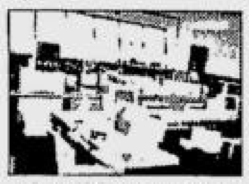

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Still 8-4-1 as Comelec tally reaches 50%

(From page A1)

provinces of Rizal, Leyte, Northern Samar and Biliran, and again, in some towns in Iloilo.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday lamented the slow count and renewed her call for the computerization of the elections.

She pointed out that a week had passed since the elections but no winners had been proclaimed in many municipalities, cities and provinces.

In the Comelec tally, Noli De Castro further widened his lead over second placer Juan Flavier by almost two million votes.

Edgardo Angara, who was third as of the close of the canvass on Monday night, fell to 10th place. Former First Lady Loi Ejercito fell to 11th from fourth place, Panfilo Lacson from 6th to 12th, and Gregorio Honasan from fifth to 13th.

Comelec Commissioner Rex Borra said the canvassing would take two weeks because discrepancies in the COCs were slowing down the canvassing for the party-list groups.

"We have to go through many corrections," he said.

In Davao del Sur, it was a 9-3-1 for the PnM, with Ejercito placing second after De Castro. Honasan, Lacson, and Enrile were third to fifth placers, respectively.

It was 9-3-1 for the PPC in Baguio City where Flavier placed first.

In Nueva Vizcaya and in the Cagayan Valley, the PnM had a 7-5-1 advantage. De Castro was on top followed by Enrile. Lacson and Honasan were third and fourth placers, respectively.

Sergio Osmeña III was No. 1, edging out De Castro, in vote-rich Negros Occidental, where the PPC trounced the PnM, 11-1-1. The only PnM candidate who entered the Magic 13 in the province was Angara. Chato and Pagdanganan were 14th and 17th, respectively.

The National Board of Canvassers canvassed 20 COCs yesterday, meeting its daily quota.

Canvassed yesterday were the COCs from Zamboanga-Sibugay, Surigao del Sur, Surigao del Norte, Tarlac, Romblon, Misamis Oriental, Antique, Las Piñas, Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur, Pasay City, North Cotabato, Pampanga, Cagayan Valley, Baguio City, Apayao, Nueva Vizcaya, Negros Occidental and Masbate.

It was a solid vote for the PPC in Pampanga—hometown of Ms Macapagal and whose governor, former actor Lito Lapid, was harassed by the Estrada administration.

Only De Castro managed to join the Magic 13 in the province. He was 13th in Pampanga, pushing Liwayway Chato to 14th place.

The almost half a million Kapampangan votes enabled PPC candidates to regain the top positions which were held for a moment by Puwersa ng Masa candidates, who got a boost from three Mindanao provinces earlier in the day.

Arroyo, who has the same surname as the Kapampangan President, was No. 1 in Pampanga. Pangilinan, who traces his roots in Pampanga, was second.

Former Immigration Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez, counsel for the PnM, tried to block the canvassing of the COC from Pampanga, citing an alleged irregularity in some entries in the form.

He noted that the total number of voters and the total number of those who actually voted were not stated in the COC.

Rodriguez also questioned the COC of Zamboanga del Norte because the COC of one of the towns, La Libertad, showed that Recto got 3,915 votes when there were only 3,785 voters in the municipality.

Rodriguez asked Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo to open the statement of voters for the precincts in La Libertad to correct the discrepancy.

"In the interest of fair and honest elections, this should be addressed because this will help us in stopping *dagdag-bawas,*" Rodriguez said.

Namfrel has been accused by the PnM of engaging in trending in favor of the PPC since Day 1 of its quick count.

But Namfrel Chair Jose Concepcion Jr. denied this, saying Namfrel merely encoded figures it had received based on Comelec documents.

"Namfrel does not engage in trending. We just put the figures, then that's it," said Concepcion.

Namfrel executive director Telibert Laoc said it was unfair for the opposition to accuse Namfrel volunteers of manipulating the election results.

"Trending is the interpretation of data. We merely report the figures we received," he said.

There was still no Namfrel tally for party-list representatives because of the downscaling in Namfrel operations by 30 percent.

Namfrel had moved from the gymnasium to the second floor of La Salle Greenhills.

Laoc, Namfrel executive director, said the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Picpa) uncovered the irregularities in the five provinces.

Laoc said Picpa found the irregularities after it conducted "cross footings" (adding the entries on the columns and rows) on the statement of votes (SOV) and the COCs from the municipal and provincial levels.

In his letter to Benipayo, Concepcion urged the poll body's special audit team to undertake "cross footings" for each senatorial candidate based on the statement of votes per precinct.

Concepcion reported that in Batad, Iloilo, for example, Angara got 1,298 in the SOV by precincts but only 298 votes were reflected in the COC.

Chato got 1,171 votes in the SOV but only 199 in the COC.

In the town of Guimbal, Iloilo, at least four candidates got deductions.

Herrera got 4,882 votes in the SOV but received 4,812 votes in the COC; Lacson from 3,027 in the SOV to 3,002 in the COC; Osmeña from 8,455 in the SOV to 8,310 in the COC; and Villar, from 7,303 in the SOV to 3,369 in the COC.

In Lanao del Sur, Namfrel said that many towns were still counting precinct results at snail's pace.

Counting has been moved to two locations in Marawi City—at the provincial capitol for towns in the first district, and in the military Camp Amai Pakpak for the towns in the second district.

"Some municipalities are counting at the rate of 10 precincts per day and the process is often suspended," said the Namfrel Quick Count chair in the province. ***With a report from Martin Marfil***

'House arrest today, amnesty tomorrow'

(From page A1)

(Nassa) warned in a statement.

Ms Macapagal, however, told a news conference that she was going ahead with her plan to build a prison home for Estrada at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City.

Even so, Ms Macapagal stressed that she was leaving it to the Sandiganbayan and the Ombudsman to decide Estrada's request for house arrest.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto has vowed to block Estrada's petition pending in the Sandiganbayan. Both the antigraft court and the special prosecutor's office are constitutional bodies independent of the President.

"In the meantime, we must have options. So we will still pursue the construction of the house" inside a compound at the military hospital, Ms Macapagal said.

The President is trying to woo Estrada's supporters after his arrest in April led to the so-called "Edsa Tres" and deadly riots outside Malacañang on May 1.

Still, groups that supported Ms Macapagal's takeover of the presidency during the Edsa People Power II continued to express misgivings about her idea of reconciliation and healing following the divisive May 14 elections.

The CBCP's social arm, for instance, said giving the ousted leader special favors only "reflects the government's lameness and lack of sincerity in prosecuting Estrada and his cohorts."

"Why would Estrada be given special treatment when countless detainees suffer each day due to lack of medical attention?" it argued.

Estrada, who is expected to stand trial next month on the non-bailable charge of plunder, is under tight guard at the hospital while he is undergoing treatment for bronchitis and arthritis.

Minor illnesses

The fishermen's group Pamalakaya said the government should transfer Estrada and his son, San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, back to their detention cell inside Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

"They should be treated in their prison cell since they're just suffering from minor illnesses," said Gerry Alber-Corpuz, Pamalakaya information officer.

Maitet Diokno of the Freedom from Debt Coalition said the new jailhouse could easily cost the government at least P1 million.

She said the money should instead be spent for low-cost housing for the poor.

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, whose department is in charge of the project, said construction of the jailhouse would be finished in one and a half months.

Reyes, however, could not give an estimate on how much it would cost. "We don't know yet, we're finalizing the design of the structure," he told newsmen after Ms Macapagal's press conference.

Seven law organizations and 15 other groups are launching today the Equal Justice for All Movement (E-JUST) to oppose house arrest for Estrada.

"Erap should enjoy no special treatment. The Erap cases must not suffer the same fate as the Marcos graft cases which, after 14 years of litigation, have not produced one conviction," said lawyer Leonard de Vera, one of the E-JUST convenors.

In Cagayan de Oro City, lawyer Macapanton Abbas of the Bangsamoro Council said his group was joining E-JUST to ensure Estrada's prosecution for plunder and alleged war crimes in Mindanao.

"Why build an annex for Estrada when Marawi City needs a bridge," Abbas said.

For her part, the wife of a political detainee demanded the same treatment for her husband who was convicted of killing US Col. James Rowe and sentenced to life imprisonment.

"There is no graver insult to us wives of political prisoners than to see a criminal boss placed under luxurious conditions of house arrest while our husbands suffer the daily indignity of Philippine prisons," said Imelda Tendencia-Continente.

"My husband Donato has been in jail for over 12 years now even after somebody else has owned up to the killing," Karapatan's coordinator for political prisoners in Metro Manila said.

Other militant groups warned the Macapagal administration of "an avalanche of protests" should it insist on granting concessions to Estrada. ***With reports from Philip C. Tubeza in Manila and Grace Cantal-Albasin/PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Gloria . . .

(From page A1)

hometown where she spent summers during her youth but it was Estrada country all the way in last week's elections.

Iliganons voted straight 0-13 in the senatorial race, according to the final, unofficial tally of the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) quick count.

Broadcaster Noli de Castro, who ran as an independent but was adopted as a guest candidate of deposed President Joseph Estrada's Puwersa ng Masa, topped the tally.

Former first lady Luisa Ejercito came second followed by Gregorio Honasan, Panfilo Lacson, Juan Ponce Enrile, Edgardo Angara, Miriam Santiago, Ricardo Puno, Orlando Mercado, Reuben Canoy, Santanina Rasul, Ombra Tamano and Consuelo Madrigal.

People Power Coalition candidate Sergio Osmeña III placed 14th.

Two winning candidates attributed the overwhelming support for the opposition to the all-out war declared by Estrada against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels after they attacked Kauswagan town in Lanao del Norte last year.

"Erap (Estrada) made a mark by making a quick decision over the encroachment by a certain rebel group," reelected Iligan City Mayor Franklin Quijano said.

"People appreciated what former President Estrada did in Kauswagan. The fact that he came all the way from Manila showing his support is until now appreciated by the people," reelected Rep. Alipio Badelles said.

In the local elections, Estrada's allies won 10 of 13 seats—the congressional and mayoral slots and eight of the 10 city council seats.

But a newly formed group called Save Iligan Movement, which is partly backed by supporters of a losing mayoral candidate, is crying foul. It claimed that there was "massive fraud" perpetrated by officials of the Commission on Elections and the party in power in Iligan, the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Nationalist People's Coalition (LDP-NPC).

The group demanded that the Comelec declare a "failure of elections" in Iligan because of alleged massive fraud, vote buying, disenfranchisement of voters and inclusion of voters who are not from Iligan.

Mayor Quijano dismissed the move as "standard sour-graping (sic)."

Supporters of his rival, Alejo Yañez, were part of the group and had staged protests outside City Hall. Quijano defeated Yañez, who ran as an independent, getting 34,879 votes against the latter's 29,891. Administration candidate Pedro Generalao, the outgoing vice mayor, got 11,916 votes.

Yañez defeated Quijano in the 1992 and 1995 elections. Quijano won in 1998.

Generalao was Yañez's running mate in the previous elections but the two had a falling out late last year when Yañez announced his candidacy for the mayoralty contest with a new running mate.

In the first congressional district of Lanao del Norte and Iligan City, Badelles defeated anew industrialist and musician Ramon "RJ" Jacinto. Badelles won by 30,000 votes over Jacinto. In 1998, he won by only about 7,000 votes.

Badelles is the son of the late Rep. Mariano Badelles Sr., who preceded his son as Iligan representative for three straight terms. The older Badelles also served as Iligan mayor in the 1950s.

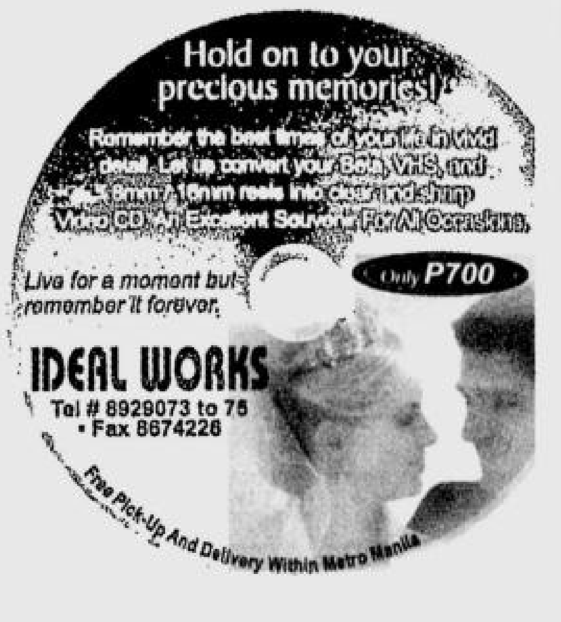
The Jacintos once owned the Iligan Integrated Steel Mill Inc. that was taken over by the government in the early 1970s and renamed National Steel Corp. It shut down in 1999.

Jacinto opened an AM radio station, dxRJ, in Iligan shortly before the 1998 elections.

Yañez's running mate in this year's election, youth leader Lawrence Lluch Cruz, won as vice mayor with 34,127 votes. LDP's Eric Capitan garnered 23,659 votes while Lakas-NUCD's Henry Dy got 18,244.

The LDP-NPC winners for the city council are Narciso Adeva Jr., Ariel Anghay, Wilfredo Bacareza, Bienvenido Badelles, Alfredo Busico, Leobert Pairat, Ronaldo Espina and Orlando Maglinao.

Lakas-NUCD's Emmanuel Engracia also made it, as well as lawyer Providencio Abragan, who ran under Lakas but was in Yañez's slate.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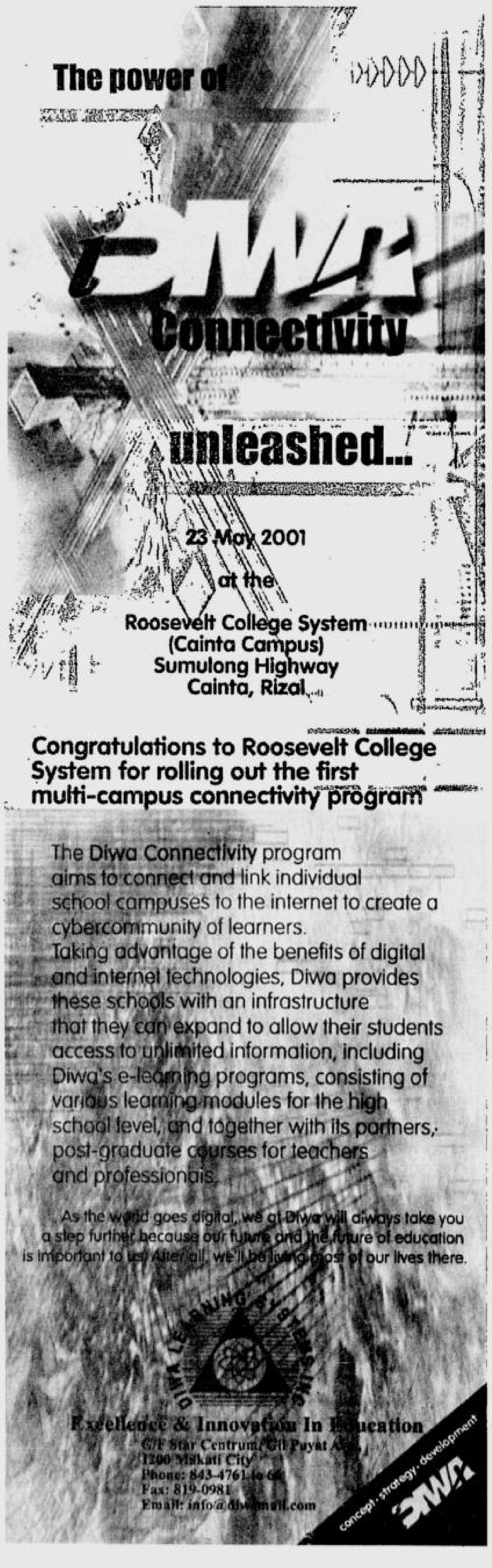

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  - Casiguran Central School
  - Irosin Central School
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  - Lope de Vega Central School
  - Silvino Lobos Central School
- Southern Leyte
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- Western Samar
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  - Lahug Elementary School
  - Bagong Buhay Rehabilitation Center (City Jail)
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- Mandaue
  - Mandaue City Central School
- Lapu-Lapu City
  - Lapu-Lapu City Central School
  - Marigondon Elementary School
  - Pusok Elementary School
  - Sta. Rosa Elementary School
  - City Jail of Soong
  - Caubian Elem. School
- Bohol
  - Pilar Central Elem. School
  - Inabanga South Central Elem. School
  - Talibon Central Elem. School
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  - Bayawan West Central Elem. School
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  - Malinao Elem. School
- Antique
  - Valderrama Central Elem. School
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  - Baliguian Central School
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- Zamboanga del Sur
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  - Lapuyan Central School
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PRO-POOR PROJECTS

Gloria presses charm offensive

By Martin P. Marfil

THE GOVERNMENT yesterday announced a number of "high-impact" projects to alleviate the plight of millions of poor Filipinos, seen as the key power base of imprisoned ex-president Joseph Estrada, to heal the divisions sparked by his ouster.

In a press briefing yesterday, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced the release of P24 million for livelihood projects for residents of Smokey Mountain and other urban poor communities, known Estrada bailiwicks.

The money will go to women in these communities and will be used to fund small business enterprises, Ms Macapagal said.

The President said the government will also put up a scholarship program for urban poor children desiring further education.

The scholars are to attend the state-run Polytechnic University of the Philippines and the Technological University of the Philippines.

About 5,000 scholars are to be chosen by the Department of Social Welfare and Development. They will each receive a P500 monthly stipend.

"Government's success would be meaningless if there are those who are not able to improve their lives because of lack of education," Ms Macapagal, speaking in Filipino, said in her speech.

The President vowed that from now on government would be focusing its attention on the poor, the minorities, the women and the youth who need help.

"We won't let them down. With the help of God . . . I will not abandon them," she said.

The new government thrust comes two weeks after some 50,000 urban poor supporters of Estrada tried to storm Malacañang demanding his reinstatement.

Four people were killed while more than 100 arrested after the President declared a "state of rebellion" and called in the military to restore order.

She has since been trying to reach out to the poor and shed the image that she is only president to the rich. She has begun visiting slums around Metro Manila, the traditional base of support of the movie star-turned-president.

In a speech before an Asian conference on young women on Monday, Ms Macapagal vowed to "heal the nation" by visiting slums and Christian communities in the South. Both constituencies dumped the administration's candidates in last week's elections.

But at yesterday's press briefing, the President doused criticisms that the "healing process" was being undertaken to prevent further mass protests.

"All these moves are meant to heal the nation, which is an end in itself," Ms Macapagal said.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao has explained that this "shift in gears" was brought on by the realization that "there must be immediate projects that would impact on the lives of the poor."

He said it was the government's response to "the obvious sentiments of the poor" and to the "rage demonstrated by the urban poor" in the failed siege of Malacañang, which had helped highlight the cultural and political gap between the rich and the poor.

Tiglao explained that these high-impact projects for the poor would be undertaken even as macroeconomic policies are being carried out. *With a report from AFP*

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269 striking Pinoy workers coming home from Brunei

By TJ Burgonio

TWO hundred sixty-nine Filipino garment factory workers in Brunei, who went on strike in protest of the management's unfair labor practices are set to come home anytime this week, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration said yesterday.

But OWWA Administrator Wilhelm Soriano, appealed to the workers to return to work, saying that the manager of the Seri Azhima Jaya Garments and Textiles has granted their demand for pay and overtime pay hike, among others.

"They have no more reason to come home unless they're really homesick. They should re-think their decision to come home," he told reporters at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

The first batch, consisting of 40 workers, is scheduled to return to the country today. They were issued plane tickets by the OWWA and had been awaiting repatriation at the OWWA center in Brunei.

Yesterday, 27 of the workers' leaders canceled their flight to Manila and decided to wait for the rest who were coming home.

On May 14, some 700 Filipino workers at the garments factory went on strike to protest their low pay, poor working conditions and discrimination. The Malaysian-owned factory also employs Indonesians and Bangladeshis.

The striking workers held talks with factory manager G.I. Chua but these collapsed. Even Vice President Teofisto Guingona, who flew to Brunei over the weekend, tried to intercede on behalf of the workers but to no avail.

Since then, the OWWA has received requests for repatriation from 269 of the striking workers.

But last Monday, a breakthrough came up when the manager announced that he was granting the workers' three demands $260-$300 salary increase, recomputation of overtime pay in excess of eight hours and improvement of working conditions, Soriano said.

He said the OWWA was ready to repatriate the workers but at the same time warned those who are coming home that they would be placed on the "watchlist" of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

"Since they violated certain provisions in their contracts, other foreign employers might have second thoughts about hiring them and this is definitely a disadvantage to them," he said, referring the worker's pre-termination of their contracts.

Soriano also said that unless they could work out an amicable settlement with the management, the 27 workers' leaders faced forcible deportation and charges if they do not leave the factory premises.

RP to stay neutral in US-China row

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday that her country is the United States' best friend in Asia but that she won't take sides in disputes between Washington and Beijing.

"We have been friends of the US for a long time, probably their best friend in Asia," Ms Macapagal told her weekly news conference yesterday. "We are also friends of China. We are urging them to settle their differences amicably."

Ms Macapagal made the comment when asked if the United States could use the Philippines as a "staging point" for military operations in Asia.

"While the Philippines has strategic advantages, we have our own self-interests to protect," she added. "I don't think (the US and China) need a pawn."

The Philippines was a major US military outpost during the Cold War and at the outbreak of fighting in the Pacific during World War II.

The Senate in 1992 voted not to renew leases of military bases to the US military, saying they brought crime and prostitution.

The government has made little comment amid diplomatic rows between the US and China, including the April collision between a US EP-3E spy plane and a Chinese fighter jet.

A study released earlier this month by the Rand think-tank says US military strategy in Asia, which for decades has focused on Japan and North Korea, should shift south to better prepare for potential conflict over Taiwan. *AP*

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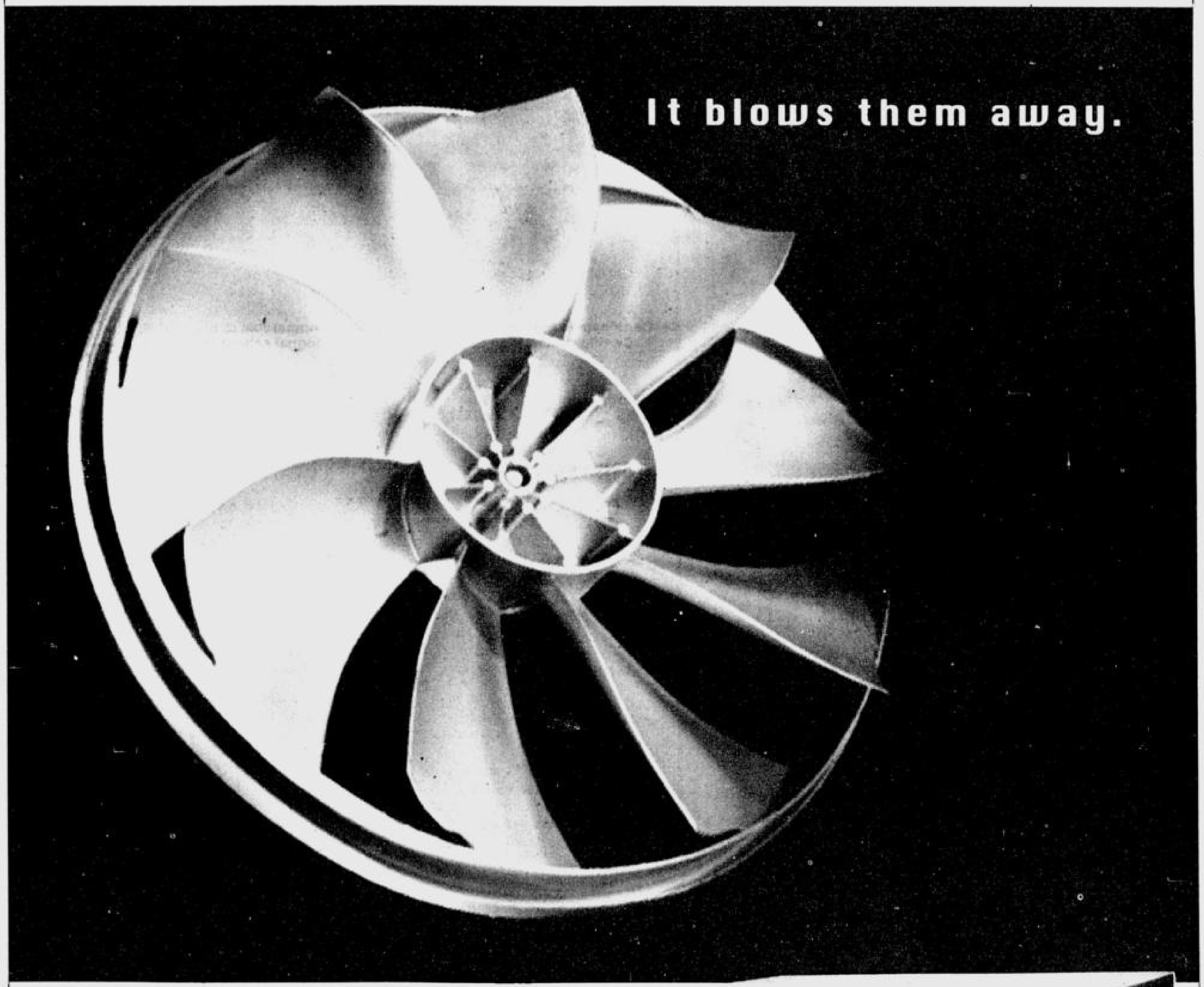

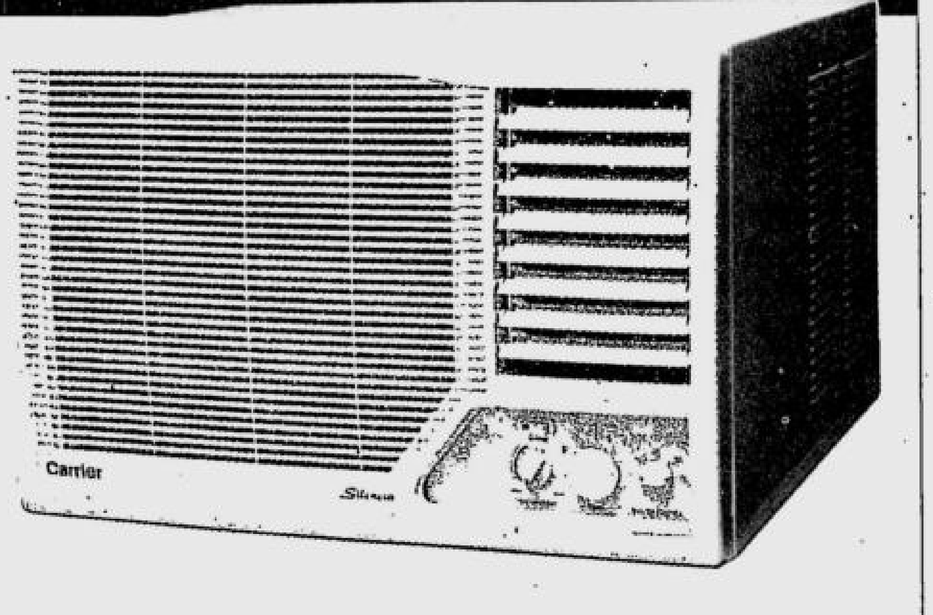

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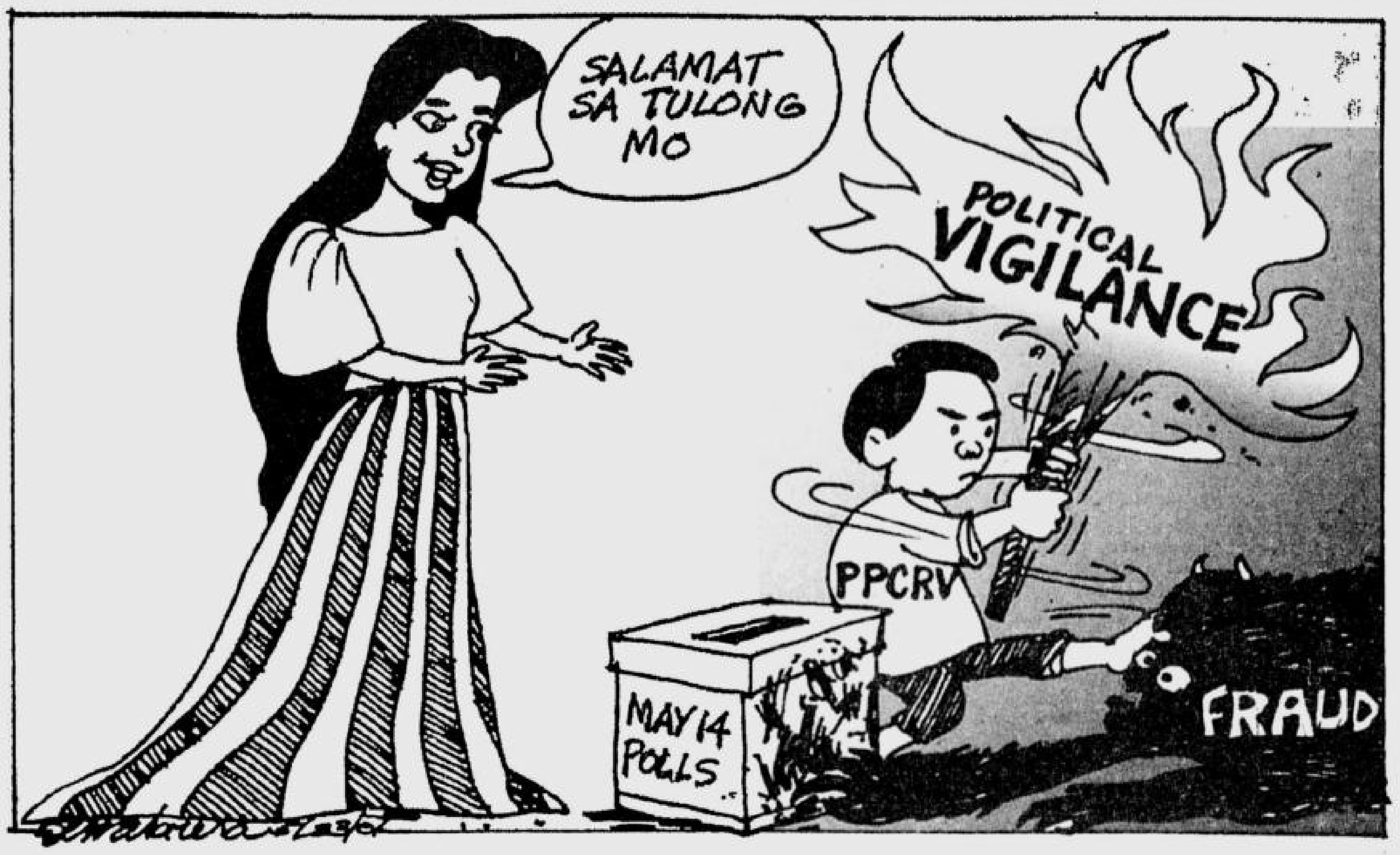

EDITORIALS

Suspicious

THE ADMINISTRATION is on an avowed "healing" mission, but surely it should be obvious to its handlers that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Saturday visit to Joseph Estrada—her second in two weeks—was a bit much. It bolstered the suspicion that something—a deal? a tradeoff?—is in the works. It did not help any that her spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao quoted her as having assured her disgraced predecessor that she had no objection to his request for house arrest. It might be clear to an informed sector of the population that the decision on that issue rests on the Sandiganbayan, but still. Her making known such a position was, at the very least, impolitic. Better for her to come across as having no position on that ultrasensitive issue, given that it is not for her to determine. (The pithy adage "No talk, no mistake" applies here.)

Tiglao should try to mind his mouth, if not his principal's. Already, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez is hard-put to contain the damage. And why should it matter at all that, according to Tiglao, Estrada addressed his successor as "Mrs. President" a number of times? Early on—after her first visit to him at Fort Sto. Domingo—the matter of the apparently endearing address was also raised to the media, which gave someone in Estrada's camp (was it that precious Little Lord Fauntleroy, or the Quixote *manque*?) the opportunity to say, wryly, that the man was merely engaged in politesse.

Indeed, what's the big deal about the "Mrs. President" bit? The Supreme Court has, after all, ruled more than once on the legitimacy of the Macapagal presidency. Why should the President be portrayed as thrilled at being addressed the way she should be, even if it's Estrada doing it? Do the administration's handlers think it supremely important that such an address should slip from his lips, and do they view it as perhaps an assurance that he has dropped all resistance (and all possibilities of mischief)? What a wistful thought, if indeed such details are what they draw hope from.

In which case they should also pay attention to a not insignificant detail shown in the Malacañang-issued photograph of the President conversing with Estrada at his hospital suite. The man has not ceased to wear the wristband with the presidential seal. Observers halfway attentive to the nuances of non-verbal language would not dismiss that as a camera trick.

Housebound

IT'S hardly surprising that certain sectors are outraged by Malacañang's announcement that the President intends to build a special house for Joseph Estrada and son, with another structure to serve as reception area thrown in. There's something truly ironic about the vaunted "champion of the masses" getting all these structures built for his comfort as his *mahirap* rest their miserable bones in pushcarts or in tin-and-cardboard hovels. Philippine Independent Church Bishop Felixberto Calang put it simply; "Houses should be built for the poor, not for Estrada."

And yes, Tiglao's otherwise innocuous assurance that the construction would not be "so expensive" adds to the general annoyance. It provokes the exasperated citizen to demand accounting details down to the costs of the last nail, bolt and screw, if only to push the situation to its absurd conclusion. (Not so expensive? Sure—but only in relation to mansions with wave pools on the side.) And it succeeds in raising the question of what exactly is behind the arrangement that the President would damn the torpedoes of criticism and go full speed ahead.

Estrada's handlers might be so full of themselves that they're choosing to ignore it, but he is actually presented with an opportunity to clothe his prayer for house arrest with the workings of a crusade. He could serve as spokesperson for all common prisoners doomed to languish in the national jails, and draw attention to the appalling conditions that foster, not the rehabilitation of offenders, but a primitive subculture that transforms them into subhumans. He could focus on the incredible congestion and the resultant filth, the picayune funds for meals, the sheer lack of facilities for productive activity.

While at this endeavor, he might just forget his murmuring heart, his wheezing lungs and his creaking knees. He might just emerge from it a stronger man. And, perhaps, it might just give his well-fed son something to do.

We need a strong president, not a wimp

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WHEN Colombian drug lord Pablo Escobar was arrested and imprisoned, he built himself a luxurious house inside the prison and lived there luxuriously with all the amenities including computers, television sets and telephones. From there, he continued to run the drug trade, issuing instructions to his lieutenant by phone. From there, he also plotted his escape—and escape he did until he was caught by the police and killed in the ensuing shootout.

That is what President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo wants to do with Erap, build a house especially for him, "fit for a president," with a separate reception house, inside the compound of the Veterans Memorial Medical Center. In short, make Erap another Escobar. And worse, while Escobar used his own money to build his house inside the Colombian prison, Ms Macapagal wants the taxpayers to pay for Erap's special house. The people already paid for Erap's house in Santa Rosa, Laguna, now she wants them to pay some more for another house. I know Erap likes to have many houses, but let him pay for them (he has amassed a lot of money, anyway), not the people. They have already been cheated out of a lot of money by Erap and his predecessors, now that he has been caught with his hand in the cookie jar, must the people shell out some more?

Ms Macapagal has also been reported as saying that she has no objection to a house arrest for Erap. It is the Sandiganbayan who must decide that, but she is obviously trying to influence it. She already made her first mistake in allowing the arrest of Erap before the elections, perhaps to prevent him from campaigning for the Puwersa ng Masa senatorial candidates. That mistake boomeranged against her own candidates. Now she is making another mistake by announcing she favors a house arrest for Erap.

I tell you, Erap's house on Polk Street will be a shrine for his followers if he is there. It will be one big party every day as they troop there to visit their boss, wish him well and plot their countermoves. I will not be surprised if they light candles and burn incense around his house and say prayers there at sunup, noon and sundown for his deliverance. It will be a shrine to rival the Edsa Shrine and, who knows, the seeds of People Power IV may sprout there.

Why is Ms Macapagal scrambling to appease Erap and his followers anyway? Appeasement is often misunderstood. Appeasement plunged the world into World War II when British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain appeased Adolf Hitler to gain "peace in our time." But instead of peace, it produced war when Hitler interpreted the appeasement as a sign of weakness.

That is what people—both pro- and anti-Erap—will think of Ms Macapagal's appeasement. They will think she is weak, a wimp, afraid of pro-Erap forces because of what they showed they could do, and now Ms Macapagal is courting them to protect herself. She must have been so shocked and terrified by the May 1 attack on Malacañang. I also believe that her appeasement moves are in preparation for her reelection in 2004. Many people don't realize it but she has already started campaigning.

But what the country needs now—and the people know this—is a strong president, not a wimp. Performance, not appeasement, is what will get her reelected. The people want, most of all, a president who will exact justice and instill discipline. The people don't want a president who is soft on criminals for the sake of peace and healing. There can be true healing only if the victims get justice and the guilty are punished. There can be forgiveness only if there is admission of guilt and atonement. Without these, forgiveness is not deserved. Even the all-merciful God tells sinners to confess their sins, ask for forgiveness and imposes penance on them before He forgives them.

People are tired of graft and corruption. They want it stopped. Graft can be stopped only if the government shows that there is no mercy for grafters. Undeserved mercy will only give the message that crime does pay.

What is so special about Erap anyway that he should get special treatment? That he is a former president? Being the highest official of the land and still steal billions of pesos from the people, isn't his sin much bigger than the squatter who has to steal a loaf of bread to feed his family? Yet the squatter is thrown with other criminals in a stinking cell and Erap is to be built a special house for himself. Where is justice there?

"Small-time thieves and swindlers are imprisoned once there is a finding of probable cause to warrant their detention. Why should a former president be treated differently?" asked former Senate President Jovito Salonga. "We cannot apply a double standard of justice—one standard for the weak, and another standard for the strong—without condemning the Philippines as a weak state, bereft of the political will to do what is right and just. Otherwise, our high public officials would be encouraged to commit plunder and get away with it by a simple offer, once they are discovered, to return part of their loot—something poor Filipinos should oppose for being unfair and unjust."

Ironically, the poor of People Power III who demanded the release and reinstatement of Erap and attacked Malacañang at the urging of his leaders, were actually working against their own interest, Salonga said. "Those leaders...who, because of their superior position and 'education' knew the facts but chose to incite them to march to Malacañang, have much to account for."

In a deeper sense, Salonga added, "it is not Erap Estrada alone who will be tried—the whole nation will be on trial (Ms Macapagal is already on trial). The trial may help all of us to answer the question: What kind of a nation are we?"

'Tapwe'

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

BY THE END of this week, I'll be 50. *Tapwe*, as they say in street corners. So officially, I've entered middle age. Though as someone whose name I can't recall—that's a sign of it—once said, 50 is middle age only if people normally get to live to be a hundred.

But "middle" is not a bad way to describe the age. Fifty is a pretty good crossroads from which to look back at the past and look forward to the future. I once wrote an introduction to a book called "Coming to Terms" about middle age written by middle-aged women—Lorna Tirol edited the book; she thought it was a stroke of genius to ask a man to write the introduction to the book, I thought she just had a stroke—noting how all the contributors there seem to have been seized by that outlook. Of being midstream, between past and present, between sensuality and spirituality, between introspection and sharing. That is a pretty exciting phase in life. None of the authors there took middle age as some kind of death's advance screening, a preview of the beginning of the end. None was filled with a sense of acceptance or resignation, everyone was filled with a sense of discovery and adventure.

That is pretty much how I feel today, being in the middle of things, in the crossroads of things, in the maelstrom of things. Aided in no small way by having written a column for close to 15 years—an accident, but one probably waiting to happen—which has earned for me the most contradictory labels. I've been called a leftist by rightists, a rightist by leftists, an intellectual by populists, a populist by intellectuals, a literary writer by journalists, a journalist by literary writers, an armchair philosopher by rabble-rousers, a rabble-rouser by armchair philosophers, a fence-sitter by activists, an activist by fence-sitters, a reformist by revolutionaries, a revolutionary by reformists, a feminist by rogues, a rogue by feminists, a heretic by believers, a believer by heretics, a bohemian by squares, a square by bohemians, a friend by enemies, an enemy by friends, a comforter by the afflicted, an affliction by the comfortable. That kind of gives you the sensation of being everything and nothing.

It also gives you the sensation of being young and old. Of having come a long way from where you started and having a long way to go to where you are going. The having come a long way of course is the more patent. I remember laughing when a young TV host once referred to a guest as someone who has lived a long life while asking him a question about politics in the past. The guest said, half-jokingly, that the polite way was to say that someone has had a full life, not a long one. I myself do not mind being thought of as having had a long life, or even being called old. Though I do get to be fashionably cranky sometimes when people get a little too uppity about being in their 20s or 30s, and remind them that being young is not an accomplishment, it is a state of being. The way things are in this country, it's getting old that is an accomplishment.

But most of the time, it doesn't bother me. Truth shall set you free—of unnecessary baggage. Age is not always a state of mind, and there are reminders aplenty of it. I inherited genes that have made me look ravaged by time—which is why I keep trying to avoid television, but which for some perverse reason (life is full of such ironies) keeps dogging me. When I look at the mirror, I often do not recognize the person looking at me from the other side. I don't remember growing older, when did he? And I can assure people that there is nothing state-of-mind-ish about the acute throbbing of the swollen toe or knee when gout comes knocking in—which has become a more frequent visitor over time. I still believe the two greatest human inventions are wine and beer. The third greatest is colchicin.

I no longer have flecks of gray hair that make me look distinguished. I have a whole crop of white hair that makes me look, well, 50.

On the other hand, I still wake up each day to find myself at the dawn of creation. I still thrill to the pounding of the surf on rocks in the dark of night and the whisper of wind in the shingle of huts on hot summer days. I still marvel at the capacity of the children in Payatas to go to school while picking through the refuse the rest of the day to make a living—in fact, I still marvel at the capacity of the poor to turn a mountain of trash into a mine of gold. I'm still awed by the awesomeness of life, the wonder of life, the magic of life. I still find every day an opportunity to learn something every day. One reader thought I was being a little too modest when I said that I was still trying to learn to write well. Not at all. I read good writers, some of whom are very young, and I am bowled over by their gifts and resolve to learn from them. That is not modesty, that is middle age.

I suppose it helps that I write, which compels me to recognize the newness of things. Someone once said that writers are nice to be with, if you are fond of children. I do not take offense at it, I take comfort from it—even if I'm still working at the writer part. There are children and children. Some children are wise old fools. That must be what the kids see in what I write. One of the greatest surprises of my life is being told that my column has a big youth following. For someone who started writing things with footnotes in them, that is not a bad accomplishment. Though it's certainly a weird one—it's a magic-realist turn of events for me. But such is life.

I did not think I would live to be 50. When we were activists, we told ourselves we would be lucky to get to be 40. Indeed, we told ourselves we would have had a long and full life if we ever got to be 40. That's what I remember when I see a lot of young people today, reeling with talent and oozing with angst, who do not mind flirting with death to squeeze one more drop from life, believing that once you get to be 40, your best years were over. I tell them to tell me all that when they do get to be 40 or 50, when they would desperately cling to life. Some of the creative geniuses made their best paintings and novels and musical compositions when they were in the 40s and 50s and beyond. Most of the rest lived their best lives when they were in the 40s and 50s—life being the greatest work in progress you have before you. You get to where I am, I tell them, and you realize that being 40 is not a disaster and being 50 is—cool.

One thing I can say today with absolute certainty: Life doesn't begin at 40, it begins at 50.

Ten years from now, I'll say with even more absolute certainty: Life doesn't begin at 50, it begins at 60.

* * *

I've posted the preface to Coming to Terms in the Inquirer Online, under Viewpoints. It's entitled "Twice Curst, Twice Blest." Those who are interested may access it at www.inq7.net.

Backing down to Erap's demands

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

IN HER effort to heal the wounds of a divided nation, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has caved in to political blackmail from deposed President Joseph Estrada and some of his allies. She is paying a heavy price for her "healing missions" that are enhancing the perception that she is either a weak President or is sacrificing principles at the altar of political convenience.

Within three weeks, she has visited Estrada two times already—first in Sta. Rosa and last week at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center—as a gesture to show she cares about his well-being and comfort. But that was not enough.

She has given many concessions and extraordinary privileges to prisoners facing very serious charges (plunder—a capital offense). Among these concessions are the transfer of Estrada and his son, Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, from Sta. Rosa to the VMMC; the building of an annex at the center for their detention; and a signal that she is amenable to house arrest for Estrada.

The issue of house arrest is becoming contentious. The feedback reaching the press indicates that there is a backlash to the granting of these privileges. Many of her allies in the multisectoral coalition that helped her to take power are dismayed over her concessions and she is losing some of her key constituencies, including the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and middle-class sectors.

Collaterally, another issue has developed—the extension at the hospital is going to be built by taxpayers' money. Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao assures us the extension will not cost much. That's not the point. The costs will not come from Estrada's fortunes, much of which appeared to have been funneled to finance the political campaign of his allies in the Puwersa ng Masa. It is not a wild statement to say that the amount poured by the opposition into its well-greased campaign dwarfed whatever money was spent to feed and pay the poor who were trucked into the Edsa rallies.

Each time the President visited, Estrada escalated his requests ranging from more comfortable accommodations, curtains, longer visiting hours, etc. to going back to his house in Polk Street. One never knows how many more demands will be made and when the President will stop conceding. Her concessions are not even appreciated by some members of Estrada's family. JV Ejercito, for example, who was one of the more rabid rabble-rousers (together with Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Juan Ponce Enrile, inflaming the hordes to attack Malacañang on May 1) questions the President's sincerity.

"What she is doing is for media consumption only," Ejercito said. "She just wants the people to think that she is a good and caring person." Her gestures are wasted on them. Her concessions are not being reciprocated with goodwill.

Obviously, biting her arm is not enough to satisfy the escalating demands of the Estrada family. If she continues yielding to them, they will soon swallow her alive.

These demands are no less than political blackmail. Implicit in these demands is the threat that if they are not granted, her administration could be in trouble. The implicit message is that the poor, who were incited to rebellion to storm the Palace, could be restless again, causing problems for the administration.

There's no end to what extent the poor are being used. First, they were mobilized for rebellion to topple her administration and restore Estrada to the presidency. Then their grievances were tapped and translated into protest votes in the last elections. And, not yet finally, they are used as a bludgeon to extract concessions from the Macapagal administration for granting Estrada special treatment while he faces trial.

There's no question about the need for healing or reaching out not only to political opponents but also to the alienated sectors of society, especially the poor. The Edsa rallies that culminated in the May 1 rebellion and the elections have left deep divisions. They have revealed the fissures in our society. But these cleavages cannot be bridged by granting concessions that have opened yet another divide that bestows privileges to some and that denies them to most.

Yesterday, the Cabinet met and its agenda was focused on a single issue—how to help the poor with short-term and long-term programs. There is now a silent struggle between the President and Estrada for the allegiance of the urban poor. The President is trying to break the spell that Estrada has cast over the poor who continue to be loyal to him. Up until now, despite the flood of evidence of corruption introduced in the impeachment trial and in the plunder case to be tried in the Sandiganbayan, the poor continue to believe that Estrada has done nothing wrong, and could do nothing wrong.

Their belief in Estrada is as stubborn as his conviction that he has not stolen any centavo from the public treasury—a belief that is the anchor of all his claims that he is innocent of the charges of plunder.

The accent on poverty is correct, but I have serious doubts over whether instant solutions can make the poor desert Estrada. Visits to the slums will not do the job. Distributing doles is not enough. Besides, the government, with its huge deficits, does not have the resources to distribute generous doles and to finance even short-term poverty alleviation programs. Nor is the President charismatic.

In her cave-in to the political blackmail of Estrada, President Macapagal is not only undermining the sound concept that justice is blind and citizens are equal before the law. She is also showing that she is a pragmatic politician seeking to broaden her constituency in order to consolidate her administration from destabilization by Estrada's cohorts.

With all these competing pressures converging on her, the President has only one asset left for which she must make a stand—the principle of equal justice. If she cannot make this prevail, her administration will face the blackmail of other pressure groups encouraged by her backdown on Estrada's unreasonable demands.

The 'successor generation' is already here

COMMENTARY

Asuncion David Maramba

YOU say that the only hope of our almost-wretched country is tomorrow's youth? Our tomorrow is already here. The "successor generation" is already here. The vernacular says it best—*nakaabang na, naandiyan na, nakapuwesto na.*

The first young group that caught our imagination were the "Spice Boys" in Congress: Mike Defensor, Juan Miguel Zubiri, Federico Sandoval, Robert Ace Barbers, Rolando Andaya, Hernani Braganza and Magi Gunigundo.

Foisted against them were Estrada's young "bright boys": Gilbert Teodoro, Jayjay Romualdo, Juan Pablo Bondoc, Francis Joseph Escudero and two who broke away—Edmund Reyes and Neptali Gonzalez Jr.

There was Jinggoy Estrada in San Juan, Imee and Bongbong Marcos for the Ilocos. There was Ranjit Shahani in Pangasinan and there is Noynoy Aquino in Tarlac. They have become unstoppable, either as incumbent or candidate, winning or losing. The point is they're already jockeying for position.

J.V. Ejercito is the new mayor of San Juan. Jun-jun Binay is no surprise. Alan Peter Cayetano is in Taguig; Jose Enrico Golez, in Parañaque. Mikey Arroyo is starting in Pampanga. John Vic and Gilbert Remulla are in the running; so are Chuck Mathay and relatives "Apet" and "Tinee." Richard Gomez may be in; Herbert Bautista and Aiko Melendez are in; so is Maite Defensor in Quezon City and there are Rozano Biazon in Muntinlupa, Sherwin Gatchalian in Valenzuela, Baham Mitra and Dennis Socrates in Palawan, two sons of Justo Orros Jr. in La Union. Kiko Pangilinan is in the magic circle; Ralph Recto is in and out.

That the most visible happen to be the son-of-so-and-so, reeking of dynasty-building is another story. The angle we are pursuing now is that the young "have come—am here."

Many questions rush to mind.

Do those mentioned make a representative sampling? Are most of the young players scions of political families? What have they picked up from their parents? How much have they absorbed, good or bad, by osmosis; how much, by example; how much, by deliberate advice or training? Will it be like father-like son?

Will some have the guts and the conviction to break free from "the death grip of the old guard power elite" and change our devastating political culture whose main feature is to teach the rich to make the most of connections and the poor to be eternally grateful for little personal favors, crumbs, really, of the bounty that politicians corner?

Are there more out there who don't make the papers? Who and where are Randy David's "highly qualified young people" who have successfully entered political life? How badly we need them to dispel the gloom of the political scenario!

Will the young people of tomorrow again have to do battle with their contemporaries in politics as we in our time, have done battle with ours? Who will prevail?

In other words, with the young at the helm, what's the outlook for tomorrow? Will it be better or more of the same?

I hope there are many more agents of change like the Lory Tans and Joey Reyeses of *Pagbabago@Pilipinas*, more Vicente Romanos of *E-Lagda*, more of the young men and women participating-communicating-coordinating all over Edsa II, more young men and women who will understand and work in earnest for the people of Edsa III better than we ever did, many more who will not adore money as much as the present bunch of political lords.

The torch is being passed. The young must aim at the jugular—at the very lifeblood of our corrupt politicians. Three founts are critical:

The young must figure out how to know and regulate the deals of politicians, the main avenues of graft and corruption, that till now are arranged in utter secrecy and swiftness.

The young must push some qualifications and credentials for public service. Too many upstarts, seat-warmers, movie actors and actresses, etc., without one iota of professionalism have gatecrashed into politics.

The young in the frontline of IT, must computerize our voting and canvassing. "The system is the heart of the matter," says Miguel Lorza of *E-Sugid*; "the human shield must be removed," i.e., all those warm bodies with which we have to protect our ballots—dramatic perhaps, but primitive in this IT age. Guess who is blocking automation?

There is truth to the accusation that our generation has made a mess of our country. But the successor generation is already here. Soon, the young will no longer have a whipping boy but only themselves to praise or blame.

Asuncion David Maramba is a book editor, a retired professor, and an occasional journalist.

Pearl Harbor, 1941

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WASHINGTON, D.C.—While the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1991 went largely unnoticed, the 60th anniversary this year will definitely be different. It will be remembered. Browsing in a number of bookstores here, I noticed special displays filled with books on World War II aimed at customers who need something for "Memorial Day," this weekend, or "Father's Day" in June. Prominently exhibited are books on Pearl Harbor obviously linked to, or at least riding, the media hype generated for the $135-million Hollywood movie "Pearl Harbor" that opens in the United States on May 25. While Pearl Harbor marked the entry of the United States in World War II, that attack was more keenly felt in the Philippines that was later occupied and tormented by the Japanese military.

Due to the time difference, news of the early morning attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941 reached the Philippines on Dec. 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. It was not a good omen. Teodoro A. Agoncillo in his two-volume work, "The Fateful Years," related that it was a cold and misty day that would have progressed as any ordinary day except that late in the morning newsboys carried a special edition of the newspapers shouting, "Giyera na!" The headlines screamed, "Pearl Harbor attacked!" or "Digmaan!" or "Binomba ang Pearl Harbor!" Writing from firsthand experience, Agoncillo described the atmosphere:

"There was tenseness everywhere. But there was no panic. Everybody seemed struggling to be calm, although those caught by surprise—because they had not read the signs of the times—looked vaguely and anxiously with undefined fear written all over their faces—fear of what was to be."

Then the Japanese planes were over the Philippines. These silver planes each marked with a huge red sun, bombed US military bases just as they did in Pearl Harbor, Davao, Camp John Hay in Baguio, Clark Field in Angeles and Nichols field. All were caught unprepared. Although Gen. Douglas MacArthur had seven hours' warning after the attack on Pearl Harbor, all the aircraft under his command were caught on the ground. We all know from history books and the memories of relatives and friends that MacArthur conceded the Philippines, marking the biggest surrender in US military history. At least he promised to return.

I don't expect to get very much history from the Hollywood film "Pearl Harbor," so I dug up pertinent historical documents on the attack starting with US President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Dec. 8, 1941 address to the US Congress asking for a declaration of a state of war between the United States and Japan. The first and most quoted line from this short address reads: " Yesterday, 7 December 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan." FDR continues:

"The United States was at peace with that nation, and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in Oahu, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. While this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or armed attack.

"It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time, the Japanese Government had deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace...I believe I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again...I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, 7 December, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire."

The bombing of US military installations in the Philippines and the above speech brought the Philippines and the Filipinos into World War II. Everything looks rather simple, something for textbooks, but then there is a conspiracy theory here. There is a school of thought that asserts that Roosevelt and Winston Churchill had advance warning of the attack on Pearl Harbor or at least they had vital intelligence reports that alerted them to such an attack. Nevertheless they knowingly allowed the attack in order to get the United States into the war on the side of the United Kingdom. While most professional historians dismiss this as hogwash, the rumor persists. This is but one of many unsolved mysteries on Pearl Harbor that will not be tackled by Hollywood. Thus, I look forward to the two-hour National Geographic documentary, "Pearl Harbor: Legacy of Attack," that airs worldwide on May 27. This documentary will definitely go beyond the movie.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Philippine democracy: 'Quo vadis'?

COMMENTARY

Rodolfo A. Arizala

ALMOST all countries of the world claim that they have "democracy" or the "democratic form of government." Others consider themselves as having "participatory democracy," "direct democracy," "guided democracy," etc. Thus, "democracy" is the most valued as well as the vaguest and varied of political terms in modern history. What is democracy?

The ancient Greek word "democracy" means "rule of the demos"—which could mean either "the people" or the "mob." It could be said, therefore, that in a democracy "political power is ultimately in the hands of the whole adult population and that no smaller group has the right to rule. In other words, the common catch phrase we hear: "Democracy is the rule of the majority." And how do we obtain or determine the "rule of the majority"? The common method is the holding of "periodic elections" to choose leaders who will govern the people.

Recently, in the aftermath of the May 14, 2001 elections in the Philippines, a friend of mine informed me that everything in our system seems to be now virtually "up for grabs," including cherished institutions such as our legal system and the Constitution. The main weapon in this struggle for power is money or wealth. And the object of fierce contention is the support or loyalty of the *masa*. The arena of power contention has shifted quickly from the streets to the precincts. But just as you can use money to allegedly buy demonstrators, so also can you use money to buy off voters. Under present rules and regulations only those who could prove that they have the financial means to conduct nationwide campaigns in the Philippines for public office are allowed to present their candidatures. And even in local elections, only those who have the financial means have good chances of winning elections. Alas, where poverty defines life chances or opportunities, still money will be the principal language spoken. As the saying goes: "Money talks." And as a consequence, poverty has been politicized. Politics has become the battle between the "elites" and the poor or *masa* in the Philippines.

Under the circumstances, one is bound to ask: "What happened to our democracy?" Through the "Policy of Benevolent Assimilation" did not the Americans introduce in our country the system of modern education and teach us the art of self-government? What is the future of democracy in the Philippines?

Many years ago in 1830, a French aristocrat and writer, Alexis De Tocqueville, visited the United States. Although he stayed only eight months mostly in the Eastern Seaboard of America, he was able to write a voluminous treatise on "Democracy in America." According to David Robertson in his book "Dictionary of Politics" (Penguin Books, New York, 1986), De Tocqueville observed that the absence of certain aspects of the traditional European aristocracy which have proved beneficial, raised in modern democracy dangers to the very values of democracy itself. In De Tocqueville's view, formal political equality in a democracy without actual economic equality placed the masses in the hands of those whose wealth gave them power but lacked the "noblesse obligé" tradition of the aristocracy and with it a sense of duty toward those whom they ruled. He further feared the vulnerability of the masses to demagogic manipulations and regretted the absence in American democracy of the countervailing influences of some aspects of feudalism. De Tocqueville also observed at that time that America was becoming an increasingly "litigious society" where not only interpersonal conflicts but also general political questions rapidly became entangled with the legal system of the nation.

With reference to graft and corruption, De Tocqueville in his book "American Democracy" (Edited by J.P. Mayer and translated by George Lawrence, Harper & Row, New York, 1969), made the following observations:

"So while the rulers of aristocracies sometimes seek to corrupt, those in democracies prove corruptible. The first directly attack the morality of the people, whereas the others exercise on the public conscience an indirect effect which is even more to be feared."

The reason for such phenomena according to De Tocqueville, is that "in aristocratic governments those who get to the head of affairs are rich men desiring power only. The statesmen in democracies are poor, with their fortunes to make."

Is not the situation portrayed by De Tocqueville with reference to "American Democracy" in the 1830s also the conditions now in our country, the Philippines, which has imbibed from America a democratic form of government? We heard or read reports that during the recent political exercise in the Philippines, money allegedly flowed like water; instances of vote-buying and the *masa* falling into the hands of "demagogic manipulations"; and some of those who govern and came into power through the use of money lack the "noblesse obligé" tradition of the aristocracy which governed Europe in the era of feudalism. And we have also observed that our country, like the United States, has increasingly become a "litigious society" where the people have the penchant of bringing not only interpersonal conflicts to courts but also political and even economic issues for resolution.

The situation described by a friend from the Philippines might be considered an exaggeration but it fits in more or less the general situation in America described by De Tocqueville when he visited the said country in the 1830s. In other words, while we have imbibed the virtues of American democracy, we have also wittingly or unwittingly imbibed its drawbacks as described by De Tocqueville in his analysis of "Democracy in America."

Be that as it may, De Tocqueville, despite his critical analysis of American democracy, also envisaged that the United States would become one of the leading world powers. Such perception of De Tocqueville became true for today, the United States is the leading world power. And so, we may say all is not lost for the Philippines because under an honest, wise and effective leadership when the people have received good high education, and culturally and politically matured because the wealth of the nation has become available not only to the few "elites" but also penetrated the masses in the form of providing them useful and productive human endeavors, the Philippines could also hope not to become a leading world power but to be one of the progressive and developed countries in Southeast Asia, if not in the world.

Rodolfo A. Arizala is a lawyer and a retired Philippine ambassador.

THEY SAID

No indifference

"Voting is a right and a duty. With what is happening in our country these days, nobody can afford to be indifferent."

—PPCRV spokesperson Ophelia Valdez on the high turnout of voters

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LETTERS

Totally uncalled for hospital visit

STATEMENTS that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has no objection to deposed President Joseph Estrada's being put under house arrest, and a second visit to him at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center are totally uncalled for. Is this to suggest a softening of the government's position with regard to Erap's plunder case? Is President Macapagal insecure about Erap's vaunted 11 million fans she cannot handle that she has to seek Erap's aid for them to be mollified? Presidential Spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao made a big issue of Erap's reference to the President as "Mrs. President" several times as if it were a great concession. President Macapagal is said to be elated over Erap's expression of support and is said to be concerned about Erap's bouts with depression. Who would not be depressed if one is accused of plunder and your lawyers are running out of excuses to avoid a full-blown trial?

Ms Macapagal is President by operation of the Constitution because of the people's outrage over perceived heinous criminal acts of Estrada and his ilk. It is not for the love of her Lakas Party which was held in even worse contempt than Erap's LAMMP before Gov. Chavit Singson's revelations. If Ms Macapagal is enjoying public acclaim in the first 100 days of her administration, it is because of her demonstrated resolution to prosecute Erap and eliminate graft from the government, and her grit in confronting the threat to the stability of her administration.

This unfortunate flirtation with Erap last Saturday will burst her bubble in no time. It is reported that Ms Macapagal had given instructions that this tryst should be kept from the media's knowledge. She must instinctively know that she was carrying out an immoral and shameful act.

These efforts at "reconciliation" between contending political parties are absolutely contemptible because in reality these are attempts at connivance and accommodation. If they are true to their promises during the campaign that they are for the welfare of the people, there can be no question that they should work in harmony where the nation's welfare is concerned, albeit in critical collaboration.

The tragedy, it would seem, is when these political parties reconcile, the public interest is left out in the cold. For decades now, opposing political parties alternated in looting the public coffers as they alternated in the seat of power. This would explain Erap's bafflement at why he found himself in a tight fix when he was just taking his turn at the till, leaving alone, as was expected, the crimes of his predecessors.

In the euphoric 100 days of Ms Macapagal, spirits were buoyed that we may see the end of this evil cycle with Erap's overthrow. With the latest initiative of the President and the return to power of the architects of grand coalitions, we may have to wait for another generation.—**E.P. DAKANAY JR., 43 Baltazar St., Philamlife Village, Pamplona, Las Piñas City**

Confusing headlines

I'M just a concerned citizen and avid reader of your newspaper. There was some sort of discrepancy in your issue last May 17 regarding the National Movement for Free Elections' tally of the latest senatorial race. In one copy of the newspaper, the article read, "It is still 8-5 for PPC in Namfrel tally," whereas another copy of your newspaper read, "It is now 7-6 for PPC in Namfrel tally." The tally in the first one showed Puwersa ng Masa candidates Edgardo Angara, Panfilo Lacson, Gregorio Honasan and Loi Estrada securing the seventh, 10th, 11th and 12th spots, respectively and People Power Coalition candidate Ralph Recto at No. 13.

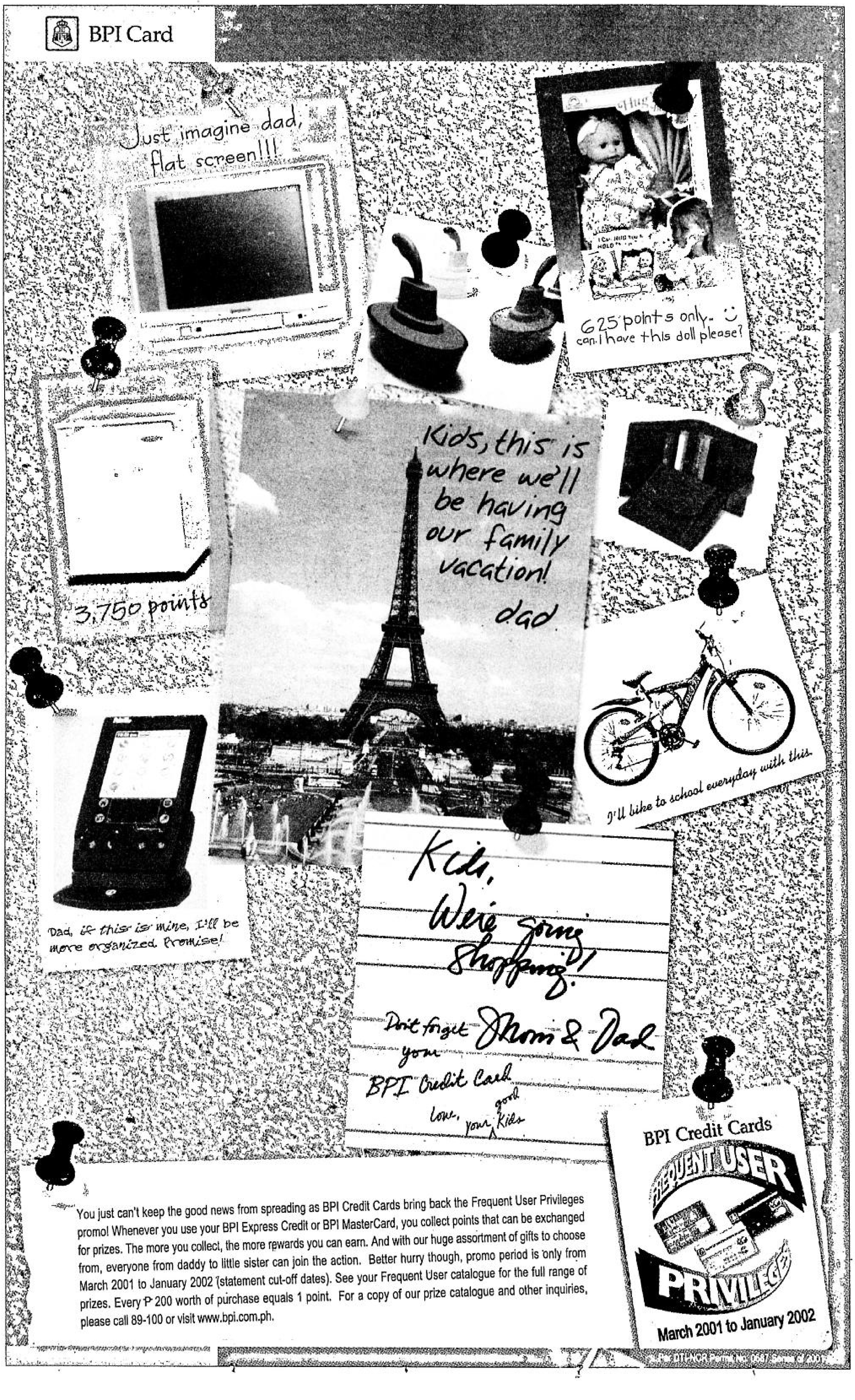
In the other copy, these candidates landed fourth, seventh, ninth and 10th places, respectively while Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile grabbed the 13th spot. I can understand if there is a problem in the tally itself but I cannot figure out why the articles were different in terms of the title and its contents.

I noticed the difference because before I left for work on May 17, I read the INQUIRER and saw the tally. When I reached the office, there was a copy of your newspaper and when I read it again, I noticed the difference. I just hope it was not done on purpose because it would surely damage the credibility of your newspaper. I also request that you inform the public of this inconsistency in order to avoid confusion. If you want to see the copies, I have them here with me.—**DAVE ASERON, 129 K-9th St., Kamias, Quezon City**

WE had two editions for the May 17 issue. The first carried, "It is still 8-5 for PPC" which was the Namfrel count by 3:50 p.m., May 16.

We had a second edition to update the Namfrel tally as of 11:30 p.m.

To know if you have the first, second or third, etc. edition, look for the stars in the masthead. One star means the first edition; two stars, second edition, etc.—**Ed.**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The chaos on Commonwealth Avenue

WE are pleased with the infrastructure projects added to Commonwealth Avenue, specifically the Commonwealth-Tandang Sora flyover, the Commonwealth-Batasan Road Interchange (under construction) and the widening of Commonwealth Avenue (under construction). We look forward to the benefits these infrastructure improvements will bring to us like shorter travel time, comfort and fuel economy.

Unfortunately, we expect these investments in public infrastructure will prove to be ineffective and futile if the crowding vendors, illegal tricycle terminals and makeshift structures at these three critical intersections (southbound Commonwealth Avenue, approaching Tandang Sora; northbound Commonwealth Avenue approaching Batasan Road; and Commonwealth Avenue, both directions, Manggahan area) continue to exist and make life chaotic. Vendors occupy the sidewalks and one whole lane of the highway, rendering half of the whole road blocked to traffic. These are worsened by pedestrians using one lane and illegally parked vehicles including tricycles going against the traffic, occupying another. Vendors even leave mounds of garbage on the pavement itself.

This is a case of a few hundred vendors making life difficult for hundreds of thousands of commuters and motorists who suffer and go through this gauntlet every day and every night. This makes me wonder: Does government exist in these places? If these are illegal, is anybody responsible to put some order here? Or is government tolerating this chaotic setup? Let us recover the sidewalks for the pedestrians and the roads to commuters and motorists. Commonwealth Avenue is a microcosm and a test case.—**EMMANUEL L. PENSON, 19 Mt. Sajama St., Filinvest I, Batasan Hills, Quezon City**

Quirks of local elections

PSEUDO-ANALYSTS have blamed the rejection in the polls of movie stars to their opposition to deposed President Estrada.

But the most telling blow was experienced by Erap's allies. This is therefore the immediate impact of the Erap syndrome.

Still, immaturity is evident in the poll results. Imagine Noli de Castro leading the senatorial race while ideal candidates Bobby Tañada, Winnie Monsod and Perfecto Yasay are at the tailend of the winning circle. Yet, there is no hue and cry from anyone.

Shame on the losing candidates who pay and bribe their way to victory despite repudiation by the people. They are the kind of public officials who impose themselves against the will of the people and usurp power.

The votes of losing candidates are worth watching. Cheating should be a ground for disqualification.

On several occasions, supporters of Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez have been caught smuggling fake election returns into the tabulation center. Among poll frauds, substitution of ballot boxes is now in the works.

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile's name has become synonymous to *dagdag-bawas*. Poll watchers of the People Power Coalition and even his party mates have to be alert.

Poll irregularities that subvert the will of the people have to be contained and the saboteurs apprehended once and for all.

Rightful winners have already been deprived of their mandate while losers were allowed to exercise powers not earned.

Meanwhile, I am afraid Puwersa ng Masa spokesperson Crispin Remulla's misplaced courage and irresponsible pronouncements like one assaulting the Supreme Court for bias for the administration may end in his disbarment once the high court's patience is stretched to the limit.—**JOE MARQUEZ, Daangbatang, Moonwalk, Parañaque City**

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

The WORLD

US renews push for Mideast peace

A PALESTINIAN boy uses a sling to throw stones at Israeli soldiers during clashes in Hebron May 21. A surge in violence since Friday, when a Palestinian suicide bomber killed five Israelis and Israeli air strikes using F-16 jets killed 12 Palestinians, has heightened international concern that fighting is rapidly spinning out of control. REUTERS

WASHINGTON—The United States launched a new drive to end violence in the Middle East on Monday in response to the grim findings of an international commission, which forecast years of bloodshed unless Israelis and Palestinians make peace now.

The US decision, seen as a policy shift for a Bush administration that has kept the Middle East at arms length, earned a cautious welcome from the Israelis and the Palestinians.

But the bloodletting continued on the ground as Israel mounted air strikes and a brief raid into Palestinian-run territory.

Faced with a deepening spiral of violence and international calls for US involvement, Secretary of State Colin Powell announced that Ambassador to Jordan William Burns would be his "special assistant" to the Middle East.

He also endorsed the report of the Mitchell commission calling for an end to the violence, a halt to Israeli settlements and stronger Palestinian action against terrorism.

The commission, bearing the name of its chair, former US senator George Mitchell, was set up in October to examine the violence that has killed more than 560 people, mostly Palestinians, over the past eight months.

But Powell ruled out for now at least any full-blown round of high-level US diplomacy on the Middle East.

"I don't want to set out what my role or the role of any other Bush administration official might be, but shuttle diplomacy is not what we need right now," he said, adding that he had no plans to meet with either Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon or Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat during his upcoming trip to Europe and Africa.

However, Powell spoke to both leaders by telephone following his announcement and also spoke to other leaders concerning the Middle East, including UN chief Kofi Annan and Javier Solana, the EU's foreign policy chief.

As Powell outlined his views, violence flared and the death toll mounted with two more Palestinians, members of leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction, killed by Israeli soldiers in the Gaza Strip.

Israeli helicopters also bombarded the Gaza Strip and briefly occupied a Palestinian town after mortars were fired on a nearby Jewish settlement.

Mitchell, unveiling the recommendations of his report in New York, called for "swift and decisive action to end the violence, rebuild confidence, and resume negotiations."

To this end, Mitchell insisted that "the government of Israel should freeze all settlement activity" and that Palestinians do their utmost to combat terrorism.

Powell said the United States backed the Mitchell report but said both sides must first choose "an unconditional cessation of violence."

The US initiative, including the naming of Burns as special assistant, follows increased calls for the Bush administration to become involved in the region, notably in the wake of a suicide bombing in Israel by a Islamic militant Friday and retaliatory strikes by Israel using US-built F-16 fighter jets.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told CNN that Israel accepted Powell's "conclusions" on the Mitchell report.

He also insisted that Powell did not draw a connection between a ceasefire and an end to Israel's building of settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Arafat, speaking in Gaza City, reiterated an earlier statement that said the Palestinian leadership "welcomes the recommendations of the Mitchell report, foremost its call for a freeze in settlement activities and a halt to violence against the Palestinians."

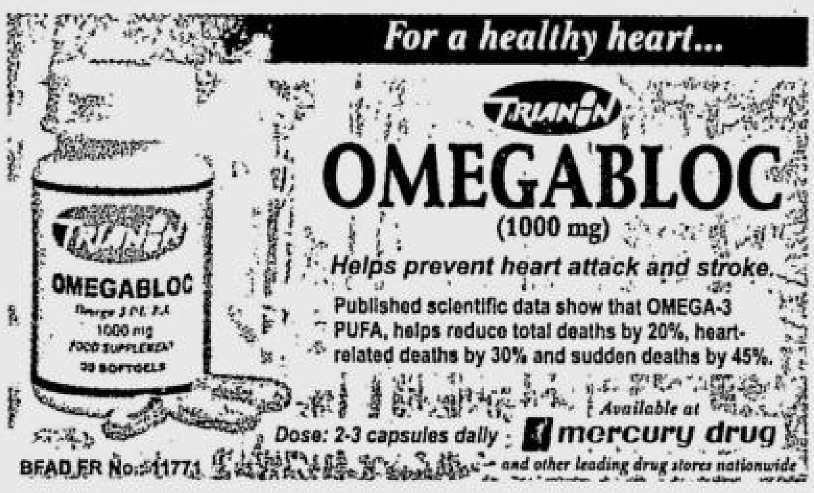
The Palestinians also called for the reconvening of a summit at the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, where leaders in October agreed to create the Mitchell commission to study the violence, then in its first month.

The summit was attended by then US president Bill Clinton, who negotiated an ultimately unsuccessful ceasefire between the two sides.

Meanwhile, police were deployed at all-time high levels Monday in Jerusalem as Israel celebrated the 34th anniversary of the capture of East Jerusalem.

"There will be peace," Sharon said at a military cemetery. "With Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish people for 3,000 years and the capital of the State of Israel with the Temple Mount its heart and center, united and undivided forever."

The Temple Mount, the holiest site in Judaism, lies in East Jerusalem underneath the al-Aqsa mosque compound, the third most sacred place in Islam. It is the most bitterly disputed point in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. *AFP*



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Asian nations meet on money laundering

KUALA LUMPUR—Delegates from 22 Asia-Pacific countries began a conference yesterday on ways to combat money laundering, which according to organizers involves an estimated $300-500 billion a year worldwide.

The turning of dirty money into clean money "gives wicked legitimacy to proceeds acquired through drug trafficking, extortion and arms smuggling," Malaysian Finance Minister Daim Zainuddin said.

"Complicated financial transactions of converting and concealing proceeds, moving them about, provide a gloss to the horrible manner the monies were amassed," Daim told the fourth annual meeting of the Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering, held in the Malaysian capital.

Laundered cash enabled criminals to expand their activities, could drive legitimate concerns out of business and could even threaten the economies of some countries, he said.

Malaysia this month passed its first law specifically to tackle money laundering, providing for jail terms of up to five years and fines of up to $1.3 million.

Judges will be able to order the forfeiture of seized or frozen property even if no one has been prosecuted.

Malaysia's central bank governor Zeti Akhtar Aziz told some 190 delegates to the three-day conference that criminals in a globalized world "have developed new and more sophisticated methods for moving money around the globe."

She urged banks and other financial institutions to put rigorous controls in place.

A briefing paper from the Malaysian government estimates that $300 to 500 billion in proceeds from serious crime is laundered worldwide each year.

"Since money laundering is an international problem, a collective international and regional response is necessary in the fight against it," the paper adds.

"With globalization it has become an issue of global dimensions . . ."

The Cook Islands, Macau and Niue are due to join the 19 existing members of the group during the conference, which is closed to the media. *AFP*

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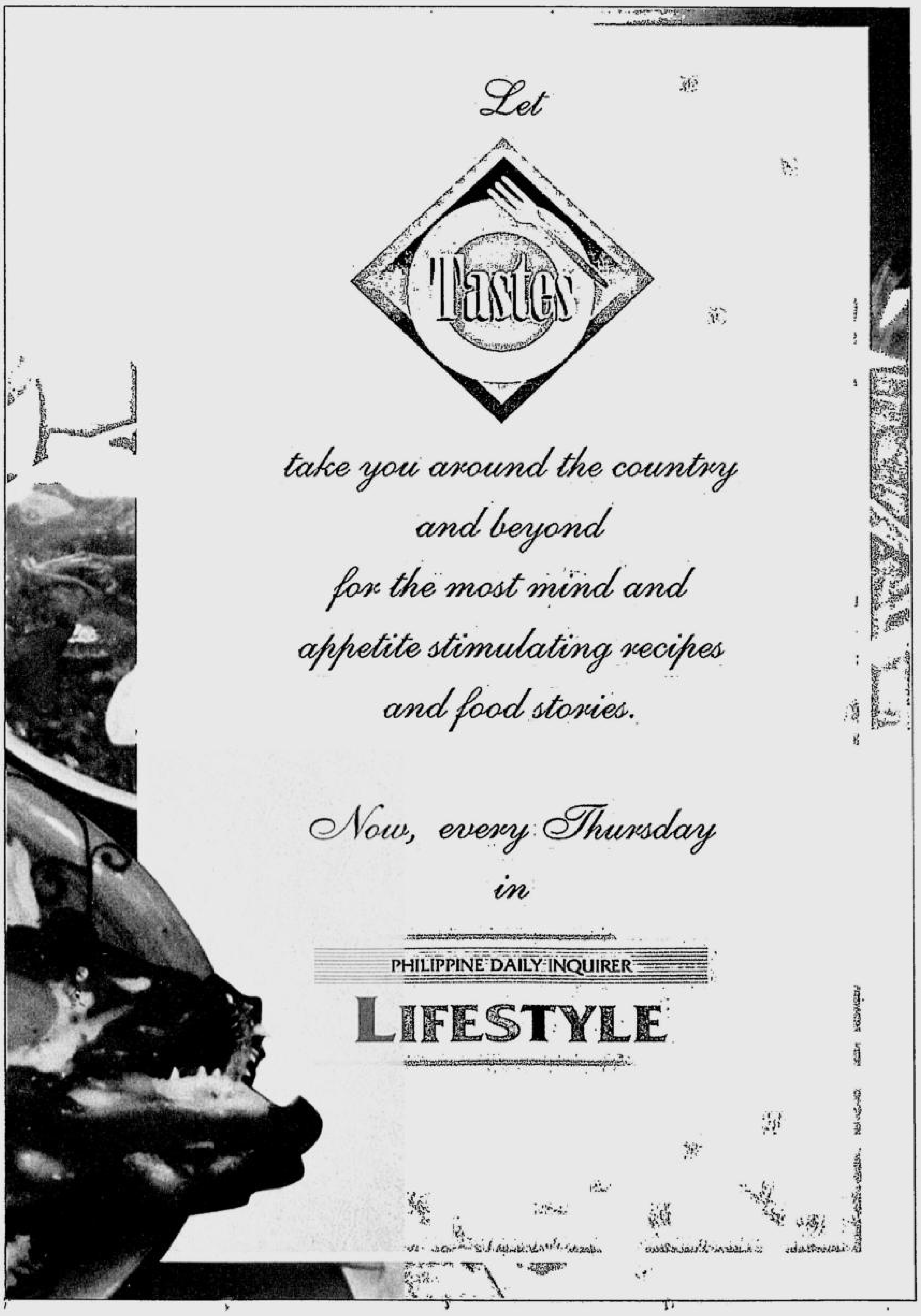

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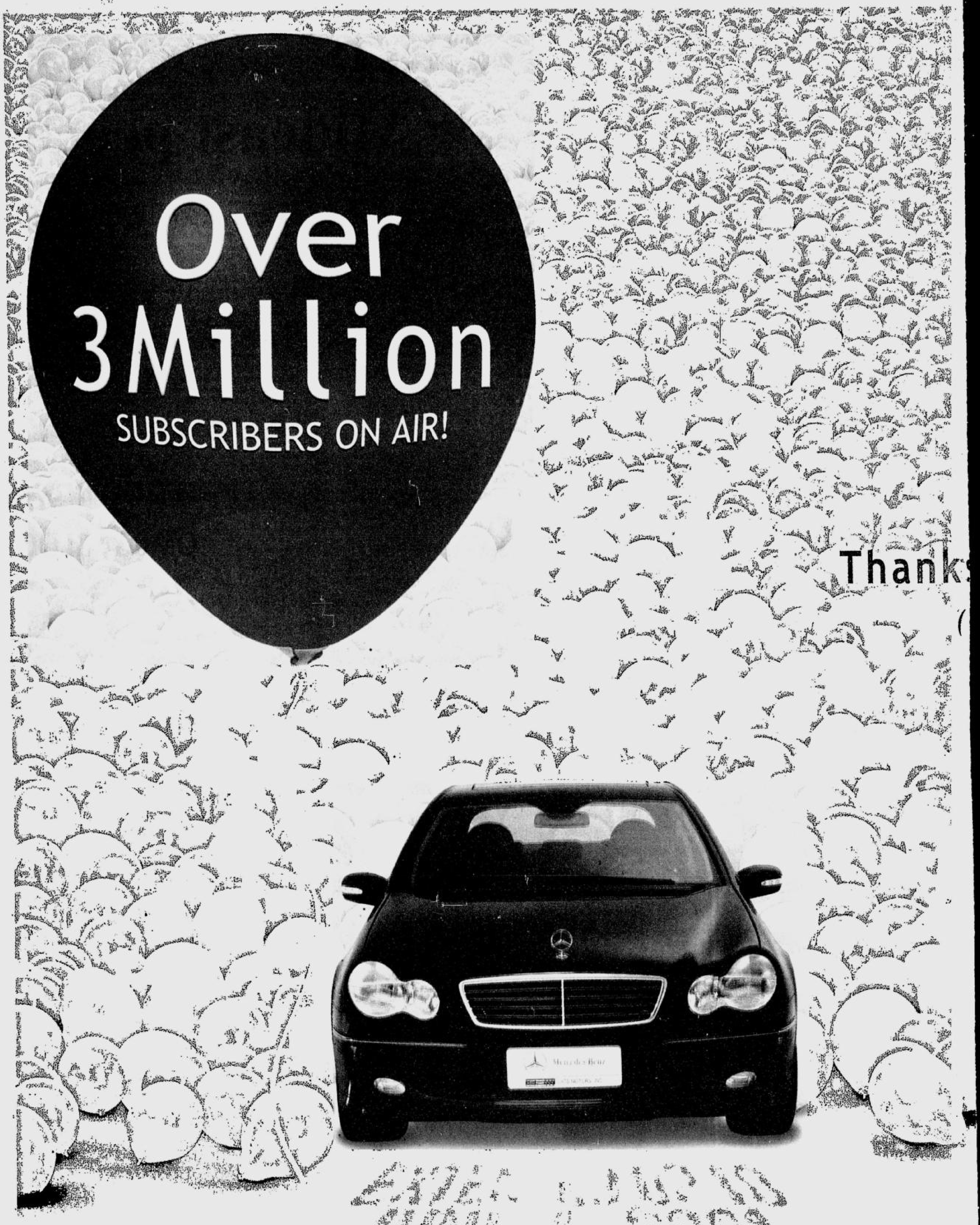
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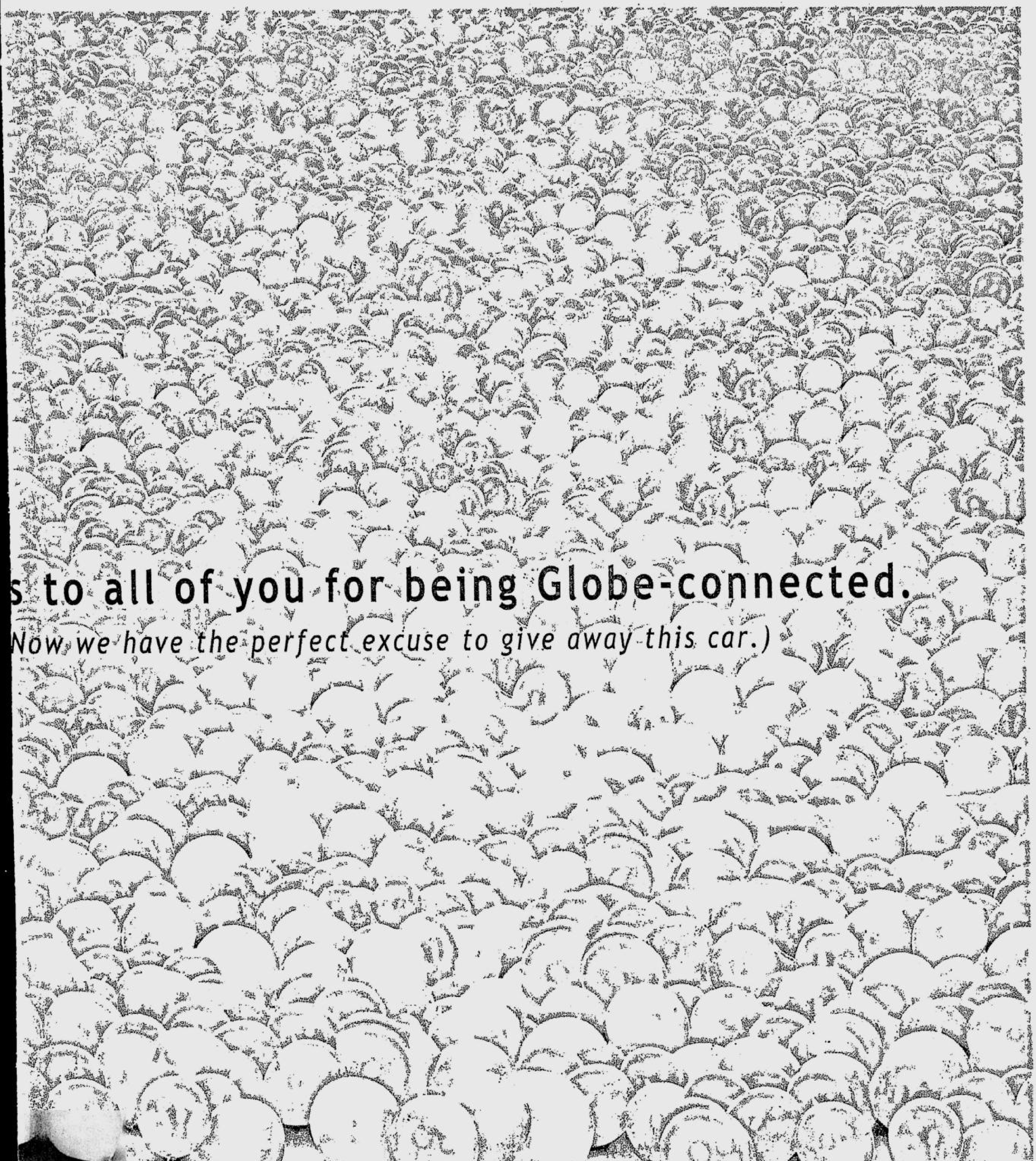
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Supreme Court can bail Wahid out of troubles, says justice minister

JAKARTA—Embattled Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid could seek the last-minute help of the Supreme Court in his fight to avoid impeachment, a report said yesterday.

Justice and Human Rights Minister Baharuddin Lopa was quoted by the Jakarta Post as saying the court could force the lower house of parliament to drop two censure motions against Wahid.

It could rule that the motions had been based on the findings of an illegal parliamentary committee and were thus invalid, he said.

"When there is a dispute on legal matters (between the President and the House), the Supreme Court may intervene by issuing an opinion on the source of the conflict," Lopa said.

Such a ruling, Lopa said, could settle any legal dispute, "especially in a case such as this where there is worsening antagonism between the president and the House."

However legal experts disagreed and said Lopa's suggestion could not help the increasingly isolated Wahid, who has seen both his vice president and the Army distance themselves from him in the past week.

They said that not only did the Supreme Court hold no authority to review political decisions of the lower house, but that its legal opinions were not binding.

Hendardi, executive director of the Indonesian Association for Legal Aid and Human Rights said Lopa had misinterpreted the Supreme Court's role.

"He is confusing the Supreme Court with a Constitutional Court," Hendardi said.

Another rights lawyer, Abdul Hakim Garuda Nusantara, echoed Hendardi and said the role of a Constitutional Court in the Indonesian system is held by the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR), the highest legislative body which also has the power to impeach the president. *AFP*

Saddam spurns US proposal for 'smart' Iraq sanctions

BAGHDAD—President Saddam Hussein on Monday rejected a US proposal for "smart" sanctions against Iraq, which Washington says would ease the burden on the civilian population.

"We have nothing new to say other than to inform all our brothers and our friends that we will reject the so-called smart sanctions, which are even more stupid than their predecessors," Saddam told a weekly Cabinet meeting, cited by the official Iraqi News Agency.

"We reject everything that can wound the honor, self-respect and independence of Iraq," said Saddam, demanding a complete end to sanctions against his country.

"Let the United States be very aware of the injuries they'll suffer after the arrows fired at Iraq," he said.

Iraqi officials also threatened Monday to put an end to the UN "oil-for-food" program, which is meant to assist Iraqis suffering under the current sanctions, if the scheme is altered by the United States.

Iraq has been under sanctions since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, which was rolled back the year after by a US-led coalition.

The United States last Tuesday proposed to the other four permanent members of the UN Security Council a new sanctions plan that would seek to alleviate the effects of the embargo on the Iraqi civilian population while maintaining strict control over the import of military equipment, according to UN diplomats.

They added that the "smart sanctions" would also aim to bring a halt to Iraqi oil exports to neighboring Iran, Jordan, Syria and Turkey outside the oil-for-food program.

But the Iraqi president said the "substance of the American plan shows an implicit recognition that the embargo put in place by evil-doers . . . is doomed to fail and has not met its expected goals."

"The embargo has hurt Iraq, but has at the same time forced the United States to pay a heavy price and to watch its image sully internationally," Saddam said.

The Iraqi leader, a champion of the Palestinian uprising against Israel, added that "different American administrations have for a long time fell in the pockets of Zionism and act according to its interests and not according to an American strategic vision."

A senior official of Iraq's ruling Baath party, Saad Kassem Hammudi, said Saturday that Baghdad rejected "any new condition" and would only accept a "total lifting of the embargo without new commitments.

"Iraq's position is clear: the embargo must stop, and the aggressions must be halted," he said.

A Western diplomat in Baghdad said the Iraqi file was at a "very important" stage because of "American diplomatic action and Iraq's intransigent position."

Diplomats said the US sanctions plan, supported by Britain, could be adopted by the Security Council before June 3, the date when another six-month phrase of the "oil-for-food" program is due to expire. *AFP*

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Chen gets rousing welcome

NEW YORK—Hundreds of supporters braved rain storms to welcome Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian, whose stay here marks the first time Taiwan's leader has visited New York City.

The supporters, some from as far as Hawaii, waved Taiwanese flags and pictures of the President as he arrived late Monday at a Manhattan hotel.

"It's not easy to be the President in my country because everybody's against him, especially China," said Kathy Honz, 46, a Taiwanese restaurant owner who drove from Boston for the rally.

A block away, about 100 protesters who oppose Taiwanese independence from China waved Chinese flags. "Unification, yes, separation, no," they chanted.

Washington has long been wary of such a visit because of Beijing's warnings that it would damage US-China relations, and the trip is a sign that Chen has won the trust of the United States, Taiwan's most important friend.

Beijing opposes such trips because of fears that they could pump up Taiwanese pride and encourage the island to seek independence. It sees Taiwan as a province lost amid civil war in 1949 and has threatened war to recover the island.

Chen's visit comes at a time of heightened tensions between the United States and China, following last month's collision between a US spy plane and a Chinese fighter jet. *AP*

POPE John Paul II opens a meeting of cardinals from around the world who have gathered at the Synod Hall in the Vatican May 21.
REUTERS

Cardinals ponder Pope's successor

VATICAN CITY a mix of the ancient and the modern, like the cell phone that rang during silent prayer, cardinals from around the world gathered Monday to ponder the challenges facing the church and who might lead it after Pope John Paul II.

The Vatican said 155 of the 183 cardinals attended the start of the three-day meeting, making it the largest gathering of cardinals in history.

Initial statements by cardinals on church unity and the role of the pope, evangelization, the need to spread the church's message through the media and complaints about lack of communication from the Vatican to the field indicated the discussions will be wide ranging.

John Paul called the meeting, drawing on a tradition that dates to 1141 when Pope Innocent II summoned his cardinals to advise him on dealing with a dissident.

Before the cardinals began their discussions behind closed doors, the prelates joined the Pope in prayer—interrupted when a cellular phone in the pocket of one cardinal rang loudly before he reached into his pocket and turned it off.

In an actual conclave to elect a pope, the Vatican will sweep the Sistine Chapel to detect any electronic devices, which will be forbidden. *AP*

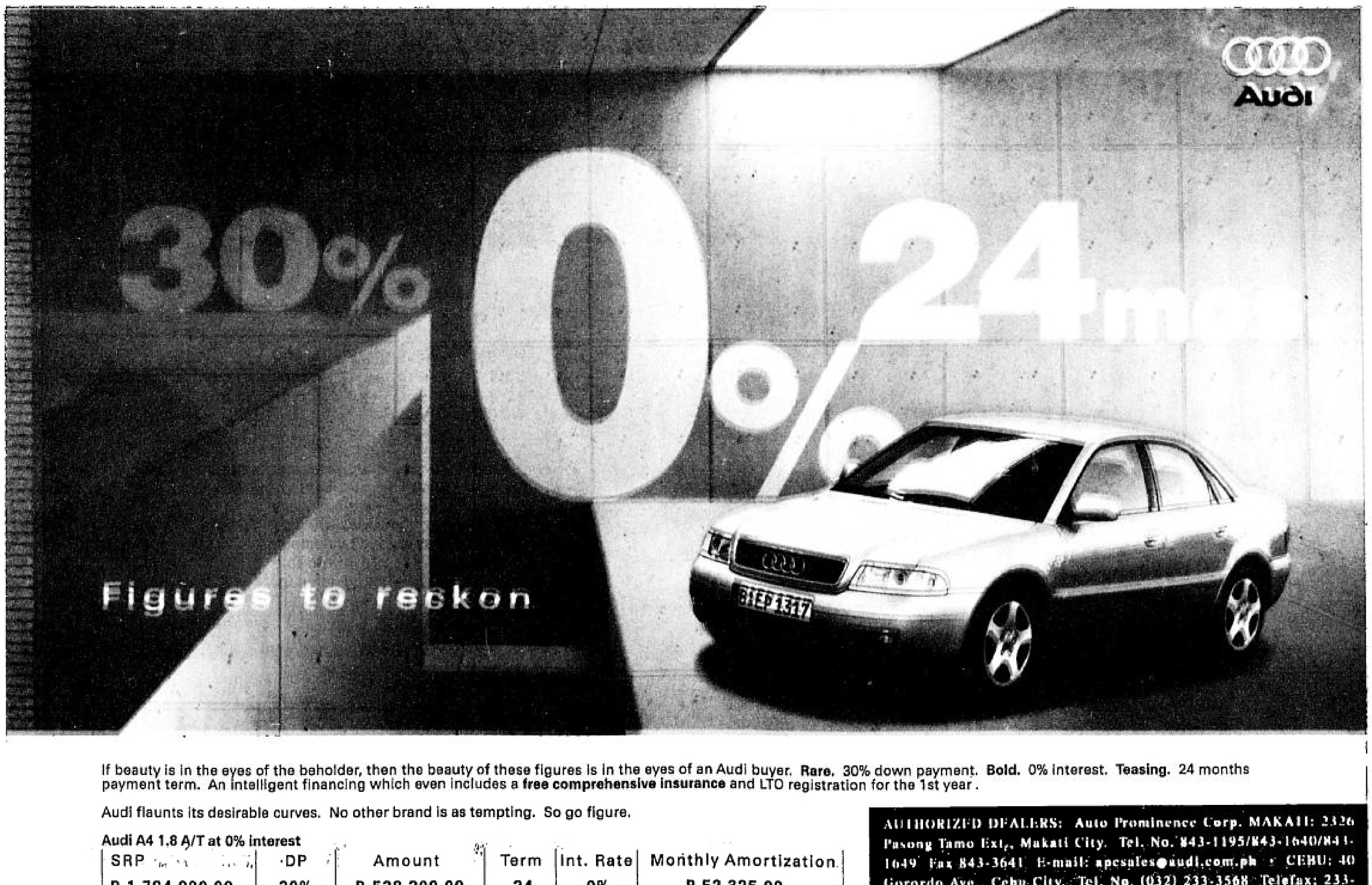
Congo River reopened

KINSHASA, Congo—The UN Security Council declared the Congo River open again after two and a half years of war, saying Monday that armed UN forces would be patrolling within weeks on Central Africa's most vital route for trade and aid.

Closing of the river has blocked food and medicine for millions across Congo, a nation the size of Western Europe. Already, two UN barges—one carrying fuel, the other three military observers—are headed up the river and will be the first to cross the front line by water since the war began in 1998.

"The time for war is over. The moment has come for peace. And with the time of peace must come an economic rebirth," Security Council Ambassador Jean-David Levitte said Sunday night during an opening ceremony held at the embattled, government-held river port of Mbandaka.

The 4,375 km Congo River, crisscrossing the equator, has always been the life route for the country. Ten miles wide at spots, the river is Africa's second-largest after the Nile and second only to the Amazon in the volume of water it carries. *AP*



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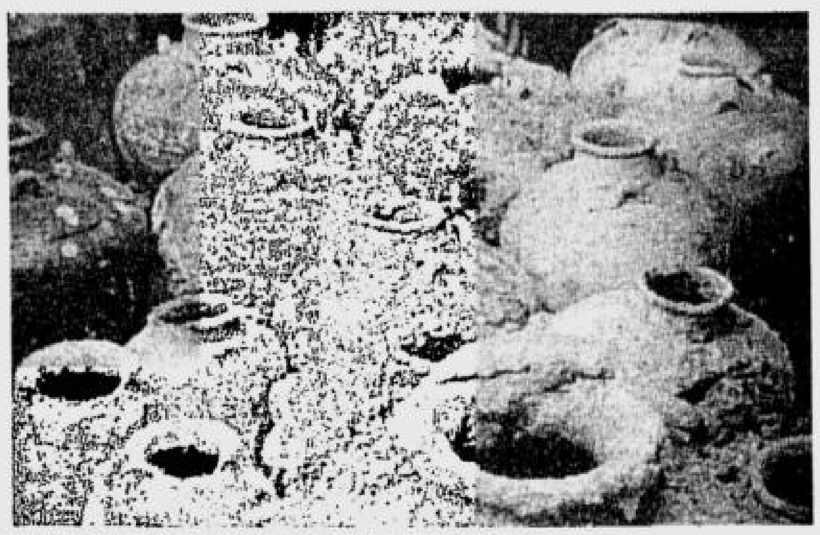
Customs raises alert to protect shipwreck



AMONG the find are Ming jars, plates, bowls and saucers.

By Elizabeth Marcelo
PDI Central Luzon Desk

STA. CRUZ, Zambales—The Bureau of Customs has been alerted to prevent possible attempts to bring out artifacts recovered from a 500-year-old shipwreck in the waters off this coastal town in northern Zambales.

Thousands of artifacts, mostly Chinese pottery believed to date back to the Ming Dynasty, have already been taken from the wreckage and sold to antique dealers and private collectors.

In fact, the INQUIRER saw three pieces of Chinese pottery from the Sta. Cruz find, which were bought by Rosellyn Magsaysay, wife of Zambales Gov. Vicente Magsaysay.

She bought the artifacts, not from Sta. Cruz, but from Subic town at the opposite end of the province.

Billy Bibit, Subic customs district collector, has recommended that Malacañang declare the lead unit in salvaging operations at the wreck site between the islands of Hermana Mayor and Hermana Menor, six nautical miles from the coastline of Sta. Cruz, the northernmost town of Zambales.

Acting on orders of Bureau of Customs chief Titus Villanueva, Bibit sent a team Sunday to this town to investigate initial reports of a free-for-all over the sunken treasure.

The team reported Monday afternoon to Bibit that on May 6, as many as 40 boats ferried divers to the site.

The report jibed with information gathered by the INQUIRER from residents and Coast Guard personnel in Sta. Cruz, including Armando Mirano, the fisherman who discovered the wreck in 1987.

Bibit said several artifacts were sold to his team's informants.

Coast Guard

His men also reported that some villagers had complained that Coast Guard personnel had been confiscating relics retrieved by local fishermen.

The Philippine Coast Guard began securing the area on May 10 and took over the salvaging operations, with the help of Stingray Divers, a group of professional wreck divers led by Klaus Sowade, a German who runs a dive resort at the neighboring town of Masinloc.

Mirano told the INQUIRER that he kept his discovery a secret until he was asked by the local Philippine National Police's Maritime Command on April 22 to lead them to the site.

He said one of the fishermen who joined them revealed the information to the local police, after which the rush to salvage the Chinese pottery in Sta. Cruz began.

Jars, plates, bowls and cups from the wreckage have found their way to other towns in Zambales and, according to some reports, to Metro Manila.

Since most of the divers are local villagers who do not have the proper equipment for such operations, Sowade said there has been "enormous damage" on the artifacts.

Accidents, deaths and decompression-related injuries have also been reported. At least one death has been confirmed.

There are also reports that two more divers have died of underwater current electrocution.

"We really have to bring this to the attention of Malacañang. (There is an) urgent need to assign a unit that will be the lead agency *para hindi nagkakagulo nang ganyan* (to avoid chaos)," Bibit said.

He added that the lead agency does not have to be the National Museum but should work closely with the museum officials.

Representatives of the National Museum have visited the wreck site and obtained sample artifacts for analysis and carbon dating, to ascertain if they are indeed Ming Dynasty wares and possibly identify the sunken vessel.

50-50 sharing

Sowade said, however, that the National Museum's reported "50-50 sharing arrangement" with the Far Eastern Foundation for Nautical Archeology seemed "out of the ordinary."

Under the law, at least half of the discovered treasure should go to the government while the finders keep the rest.

"The National Museum can give a certain amount for recovery but in my opinion, it (the foundation) should not take away as much as 50 percent from the Philippine treasury," Sowade said.

"Besides, what else would their role be when the salvaging (operation) is already going on?"

It was not clear if the 50-50 sharing is the standard arrangement between the National Museum and private groups engaged in archeological explorations.

In a report published by the INQUIRER last August on the Busuanga exploration in Palawan, United Asia Ocean Quests Inc. said that under its sharing agreement with the National Museum, "all one-of-a kind pieces will go to the museum" while artifacts where there are more than one item would be split equally.

The INQUIRER learned that the National Museum has had at least one joint project with the foundation, the San Isidro excavation of a Chinese shipwreck that yielded over 1,000 Ming Dynasty ceramics in November last year.

Sowade, who has some 30 years of experience in underwater archeological explorations, estimated that the Sta. Cruz find could be worth as much as $5 million.

Coast Guard authorities said they have barely scratched the surface since the artifacts recovered thus far were those apparently from the middle level of the vessel.

"*Marami pa po dahil hindi pa nakukuha ang malalim* (There are more artifacts in the wreck as they have not gone to the ship's interior)," Mirano said.

"*Ang nabuksan po d'yan parang gitna lang dahil 'yung nakapa po naming kahoy, sa gilid lang. Mababa pa ang kabilang gilid* (What they penetrated in that wreckage, I think, was the middle level of the ship because the wood that we came in contact with belongs to one side of the ship. The other side was lower)," he explained.

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Butterflies freed in founding rites

NAGA CITY—Residents of Camarines Sur have found a unique way to open the celebration of their province's founding anniversary.

As confetti rained and fireworks exploded at the Plaza Rizal here, hundreds of butterflies were freed from 10 decorated boxes, swarming the stage and lending color to the rather drab backdrop.

People applauding the fluttering insects.

Provincial officials and beauty pageant contestants released the butterflies in earthly and bright colors, symbolizing the multicultural origins of the Bicolanos and their tolerance to progressive ideas.

This year, according to Gov. Luis Villafuerte, will be the beginning of major development initiatives in the province on his third and last term of office.

These will culminate in the grandest celebration ever when Camarines Sur turns 425 years old, he said.

Organizers of the 422nd Foundation Day said that though this year's celebration lacked the pageantry that characterized previous festivities, it was full of symbolism.

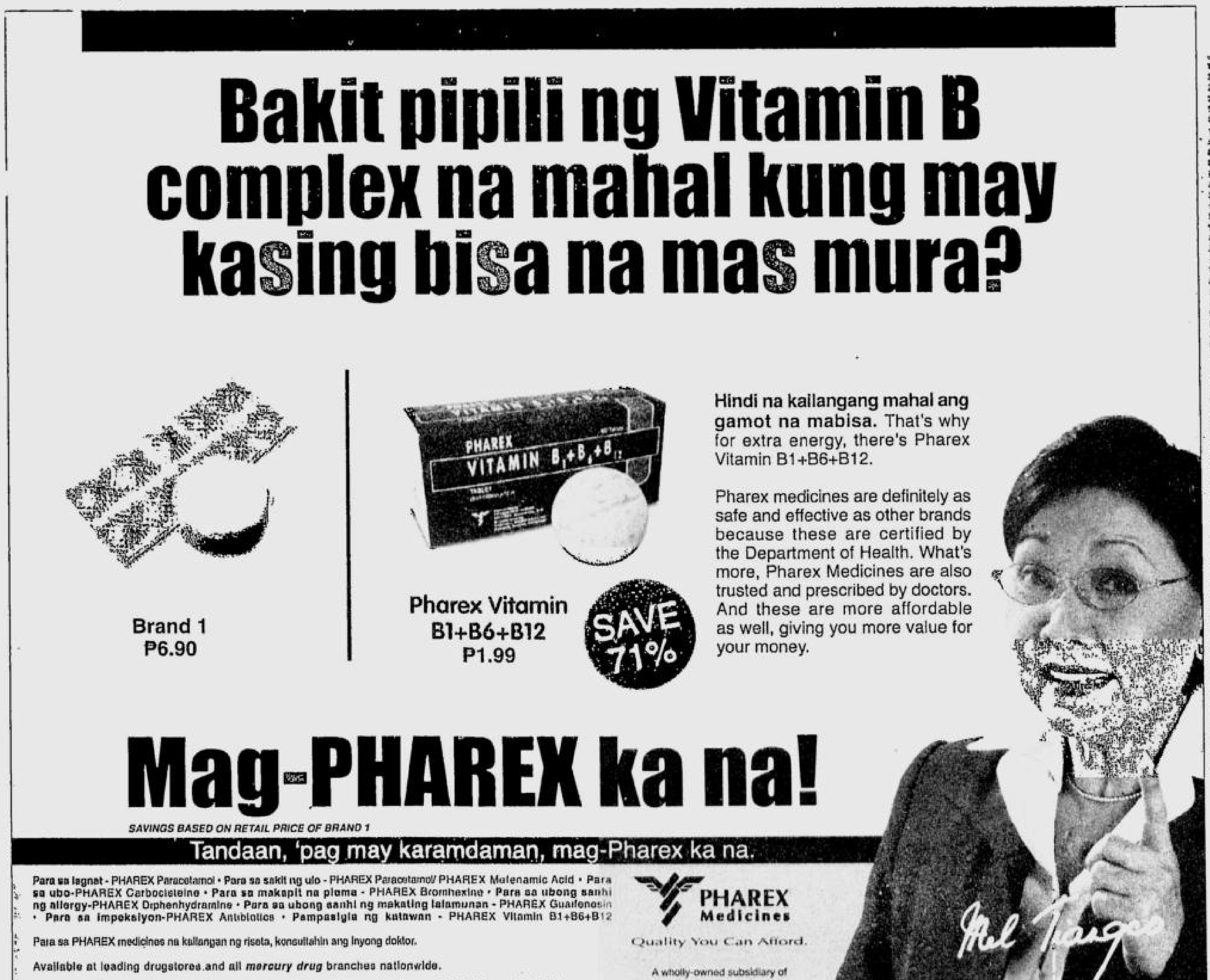
Prof. Danilo Gerona, Bicol historian, said the celebration at the Plaza Rizal highlighted Naga as the heart of Bicol where the first settlement of modern civilization in the region was founded.

Gerona likened the plaza to Puerto del Sol in Spain, which he said was the favorite meeting place of Filipino patriots.

Plaza Rizal was the site of the first settlement in Bicol where Christianity was first propagated, he said. A central government took effect when Ambos Camarines was founded on May 27, 1579 through a Spanish royal decree.

Naga is also home of the regional patroness, Our Lady of Peñafrancia, whose fiesta in September is the major religious event in Bicol.

During the opening ceremony, Vice Gov. Imelda Papin reiterated a call for unity of all people in the province to support the historical heritage that made the Bicolanos *oragon* (achiever, exemplary performer, excellent worker). ***Juan Escandor, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***



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Who is winning, who is losing in the provinces

(Due to space constraints, we are excluding from the list candidates who were earlier proclaimed winners by the Commission on Elections and whose names appeared in the May 21 and 22, 2001 issues of the Inquirer.--Ed.)

CORDILLERA ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

APAYAO

Lone District	
Elias Bulut Jr. (NPC)	2,351
Noble Perez (Lakas-NUCD)	1,621
Governor	
Elias Bulut Sr. (NPC)	2,351
Ambaro Sagle (Reporma-LM)	731

ISABELA

District 4	
(Comelec: Returns from Santiago City pending)	
Antonio Abaya	25,869
Giorgigi Aggabao	20,777

CENTRAL LUZON

PAMPANGA

District 3 (proclaimed)
Oscar Rodriguez (Lakas)

NUEVA ECIJA

District 2	
(Comelec: 6 of 8 towns)	
Eleuterio Violago (Lakas)	36,580
Simeon Garcia Jr. (Balane)	25,604
District 4	
(Comelec: 5 of 8 towns)	
Raul Villareal	52,957
Gregorio Manuel	21,551

SOUTHERN TAGALOG

CAVITE (proclaimed)
District 1
Abaya, Plaridel M. (LP)
District 2
Remulla, Gilbert (Magdalo)
District 3
Beratio, Napoleon R. (PM)
Governor
Maliksi, Erineo S. (PM)

ORIENTAL MINDORO (proclaimed)
District 1
Levisto, Charity P. (Lakas)
District 2
Umali, Alfonso Jr. V. (LP)
Governor
Marasigan, Bartolome Sr.(Lakas)

PALAWAN (proclaimed)
District 1
Sandoval, Vicente (Lakas)
District 2
Mitra, Abraham (LDP)
Governor
Reyes, Joel (Lakas)

BICOL

SORSOGON

(Comelec: final tally)	
District 1	
Escudero, Francis (NPC)	69,874
Gohol, Gil S. (Lakas-NUCD)	20,163
District 2	
Gonzales, Rodolfo F. (Lakas)	44,073
Solis, Jose G. (Ind.)	48,579
Governor	
Lee, Raul (LDP)	141,811
Guab, Romeo (Lakas)	52,008

CAMARINES SUR (proclaimed)

District 1	
Andaya, Rolando Jr. G. (Lakas)	67,165
District 2	
Roco, Sulpicio Jr. S. (Aksyon)	45,162
District 3	
Fuentebella, Felix William(NPC)	35,763
District 4	
Alfelor, Felix (Lakas-NUCD)	45,347
Governor	
Villafuerte, Luis R. (LDP)	242,646

WESTERN VISAYAS

NEGROS OCCIDENTAL (proclaimed)
District 1
Julio Ledesma IV (UNA)
District 2
Alfredo Maranon (NPC-UNA)
District 3
Jose Carlos Lacson (UNA)
District 5
Jose Apolinario Lozada (Lakas)
District 6
Genaro Alvarez (NPC)

ILOILO

District 1	
(Comelec: 7 of 7 towns)	
Proclamation suspended	
Oscar Garin (NPC)	63,496
Jaime Torres (Lakas NUCD)	59,846
District 3	
(Comelec: 5 of 9 towns)	
Arthur Defensor (Lakas)	70,251
District 4 (proclaimed)	
Narciso Monfort (Lakas)	
Governor (proclaimed)	
Niel Tupas (LDP)	

GUIMARAS

(Comelec 249 of 364 precincts, 68.4%)	
Lone District	
Edgar Espinosa (Lakas)	14,863
Vicente de Asis (LDP)	12,150
Governor	
Rahman Nava (LDP)	24,207
Gerry Yucon (Lakas)	8,887

CENTRAL VISAYAS

CEBU

District 3	
(Comelec 6 of 6 towns and one city)	
Antonio Yapha Jr. (Alayon)	45,215
Jose Soberano III (Promdi)	29,999
District 6 (proclaimed)	
Nenssa Soon-Ruiz (Alayon)	
Governor	
(Comelec. 44 of 47 towns and 5 cities)	
Pablo Garcia (Promdi)	465,021
Fernando Celeste (Alayon)	419,068

CEBU CITY

(Comelec 315 of 1,985 precincts or 15.86%)	
North District	
Raul Del Mar (Promdi-PPC)	18,542
Florencio Villarin (Ind.)	2,388
South District	
Antonio Cuenco (Promdi)	18,541
Aristotle Batuhan (Alayon)	17,237

EASTERN VISAYAS

LEYTE

District 1	
(Comelec: 7 of 7 towns and 1 city)	
Ted Failon (Ind.)	55,758
Alfred Romualdez (NPC-KBL)	50,736
District 4	
(Comelec: 5 of 6 towns, 1 city)	
Eufrocino Codilla Sr	34,275
Victoria Larrazabal-Locsin	28,066
District 5	
(Comelec 8 of 9 towns)	
Enberto Veloso Loreto (LDP)	29,823
Carmen Loreto Cari (Lakas)	32,415
Governor	
Comelec 39 of 41 towns and 1 city)	
Remedios Petilla (Lakas)	246,977
Catalina Loreto-GO (LDP)	137,747

EASTERN SAMAR
Governor (proclaimed)
Clotilde Salazar (NPC)

SAMAR

(Only 2 precincts left to be counted)	
District 1	
Reynaldo Uy (LP)	50,920
Paz Tuazon (Lakas)	50,802

SOUTHERN LEYTE

Lone District (final)	
Anecito Saludo (Lakas)	65,777
Rebert Castañares (NPC)	57,577
Governor	
Rosette Lerias (NPC)	67,453
Roger Mercado (Lakas)	65,614

MINDANAO

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY

(Namfrel)	
Lone district	
Jaraula, Constantino (PnM)	54,591
Damasing, Erasmo (Lakas)	39,223

COMPOSTELA VALLEY (proclaimed)
District 1
Zamora, Manuel (Lakas)
District 2
Amatong, Prospero (Lakas)

DAVAO CITY

(Namfrel: 2,848 of 3,055 precincts, 89%)	
District 1	
Nograles, Prospero (Lakas)	84,190
Avisado, Wendell (PDP)	42,894
District 2	
Garcia, Vicente (NPC)	24,291
Alterado, Sinforiano (PMP)	21,412
District 3	
Lopez, Ruy Elias (NPC)	46,514
Rodriguez, Sonja (Ind.)	13,678
Dolor, Allan (LDP)	12,124

DAVAO DEL NORTE (proclaimed)
District 1
Olano, Arel (Lakas)

MISAMIS ORIENTAL

District 1 (proclaimed)	
Moreno, Oscar (Lakas-NUCD)	
District 2 (proclaimed)	
Baculio, Augusto (LDP)	
Governor	
Calingin, Antonio (LDP)	45,801
Lagbas, Danilo (Lakas-NUCD)	35,332

CAMIGUIN

Lone District (proclaimed)	
Romualdo, Jordan J. (NPC)	
Governor	
Romualdo, Pedro (Lakas)	23,189
Neri, Juan Margarito (NP/PPC)	12,142

NORTH COTABATO (proclaimed)
District 1
Taino-Santos, Emmylou (Ind.)
District 2
Ipong Gregorio (NPC)

SOUTH COTABATO (proclaimed)
District 1 (Gen. Santos City)
Antonino-Custodio, D. (NPC)
District 2
Pingoy, Arthur (NPC)
Governor
Fuentes, Daisy (NPC)

COTABATO CITY

Lone District	
Arnel Datukon (Lakas)	12,081
Didagen Dilangalen (NPC)	23,301

SURIGAO DEL SUR

District 1	
Prospero Pichay (Lakas-NUCD)	65,257
Mario Lumanao (LP)	27,620
District 2	
Jesnar Falcon (NPC)	42,680
Alberto Tan (Lakas-NUCD)	26,622

ZAMBOANGA CITY

(Namfrel 922 precincts)	
Lone District	
Lobregat, Celso (LDP)	50,425
Arañez, Efren (Lakas-NUCD)	16,362
Climaco, Luis (PDP)	18,432

Zamboanga del Sur (proclaimed)
District 1
Isidro Real J. (Lakas)
District 2
Felomina San Juan

Sulu (proclaimed)
District 1
Hussin Amin
District 2
Munir Arbison

Proclaim gov's win, ralliers demand

MAASIN CITY—About 400 supporters for reelectionist Gov. Rosette Lerias (NPC) on Monday staged a rally in front of the provincial capitol to demand her proclamation as winner in the May 14 polls.

They alleged that gubernatorial candidate and former Rep. Roger Mercado filed a complaint against Lerias in order to delay her proclamation.

The protesters left at noon after they were told that Mercado had elevated his complaint to the Commission on Elections in Manila. The Provincial Board of Canvassers (PBC) dismissed the complaint for lack of jurisdiction.

Provincial prosecutor Antonio Ruiz, a PBC member, said the complaint should have been filed before the municipal board of canvassers (MBC) because it was addressed to the MBC

Based on the PBC final tally on Monday, Lerias got 68,377 votes and Mercado, 66,469, or a margin of 1,908 votes

But the PBC suspended Lerias' proclamation after Mercado filed a complaint on May 19 that the governor allegedly committed fraud and irregularities during the election.

He questioned the alleged defective election returns in six towns where Lerias and other Nationalist People's Coalition candidates won.

These were in the towns of Liloan, Pintuyan, St. Bernard, San Juan, Hinundayan and Silago, which have a total of 33,583 votes.

Lerias said the allegations were made only to derail the "true will of the people." *Jani Arnaiz, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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Soldier held for meddling

JOLO, Sulu—An Army soldier was arrested after he was caught interfering in the canvassing of election returns in Patikul town.

Col. Romeo Tolentino, chief of the 104th Army Brigade, identified the soldier as Pfc. Erzal Omar, who was charged with electioneering for interfering on behalf of his relatives who are running for local positions in that municipality.

Omar's brother, Hadji Sali Musa, is a candidate for councilor. His cousin, Muhammad John Andah Usman, is vying for the vice mayoral post in the same town.

Omar, who is assigned with the 21st Rifle Separate Company, was ordered disarmed and arrested. He is now detained at the Jolo police station.

The May 14 political exercise was one of the most orderly and peaceful elections in the history of the province, belying earlier fears of election-related violence. Sulu was listed among more than 70 possible hot spots by the Comelec.

The exercise went on smoothly despite reports of alleged vote-buying and, as elsewhere, the difficulties and inconveniences suffered by the teachers. ***Noralyn Mustafa and Alexander Young, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Delay in proclamation sparks protests in Sulu

BY NORLYN MUSTAFA
AND ALIKANDER YOUNG
PDI Mindanao Bureau

JOLO, Sulu—As if to affirm the apprehension of many people, the appearance of peaceful elections in this province may yet be just that—an appearance.

Observers fear that contesting camps may yet reveal the ugly truth that underneath the surface of peace may be another violent feud brewing.

This, as supporters of a gubernatorial candidate lashed out at the Commission on Elections (Comelec) here for allegedly delaying the proclamation of the winner in the gubernatorial race.

Supporters of gubernatorial candidate and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) chief of staff Yubp Jikiri have stormed the gates of Army headquarters here to protest the alleged delay in the "proclamation" of their candidate.

The Comelec canvassing office is based at Camp Teodulfo Bautista, headquarters of the 104th Army Brigade.

Omar Bailang, Jikiri's campaign coordinator and one of the leaders of the protest action, questioned the Comelec's action in allegedly deferring the proclamation of a winner in the gubernatorial contest.

He claimed that Jikiri won over incumbent Gov. Abdusakur Tan in the final tally of votes. Only two candidates, Tan (PMP) and Jikiri (Lakas-NUCD-UMDP-MNLF), are vying for the post.

Protested ballots

The ballots of the last municipalities were opened just Sunday night. Ballang claimed that Jikiri won by a "landslide" over Tan, but the certificates of canvass of the votes in the municipalities of vote-rich Patikul, Parang, Indanan and Siasi are under protest.

The legal counsel of Tan has filed an objection to the canvass of votes in Patikul, Parang and Indanan, while Jikiri is protesting that of Siasi.

Comelec on Sunday night proclaimed the winners for the congressional positions in the two districts of Sulu. Hussin Amin has been reelected congressman in the first district, while engineer Munir Arbison bested his opponents in the 2nd district. However, the Comelec named no winners as yet for the gubernatorial post.

"We want Comelec to decide now. We wonder why they are not proclaiming the governor," Ballang said, claiming that if the votes in the three municipalities under protest are included, "Jikiri is leading 10,000 to 15,000 votes."

But the results revealed by Namfrel-Sulu as of Monday showed Tan leading by over 11,000 in 10 out of 18 municipalities in Sulu.

Legal procedure

Helen Aguila-Flores, Comelec director for Western Mindanao, who has stationed herself in Sulu since the eve of the polls to personally supervise the elections, said the poll body simply followed the legal procedure in opting not to proclaim a winner for the gubernatorial post.

Flores cited Republic Act No. 7166, stating that the Comelec may proclaim winners for the gubernatorial post after it shall have ruled on the protests.

"Under the law, if there's an objection on the certificates of canvass, we have to set it aside and rule on the objection within 24 hours to allow the aggrieved parties to submit to us evidence as basis of their objection," Flores said.

Comelec was able to proclaim the winners for the two congressional posts because of the provisions of RA 7166, she said.

"Under RA 7166, pre-proclamation controversies for congressional votes are not allowed," Flores said, adding that aggrieved parties may still appeal the local Comelec ruling with the national Comelec office, and with the Supreme Court.

Supporters of Jikiri started flocking to Camp Bautista as early as Sunday night after it was known that the proclamation was deferred.

The noisy crowd of around 500 outside the brigade headquarters began to swell as tens of minibuses loaded with supporters from different municipalities were fetched by leaders of the protesters.

Second try

This is Jikiri's second try for the governorship of Sulu since the MNLF joined mainstream politics after the signing of the 1996 GRP-MNLF peace agreement.

Earlier, Tan and majority of mayors of Sulu had issued a resolution asking for the reassignment of MNLF Army integrees who they feared would be used by Jikiri to gather support in his election bid.

Observers fear the protests may escalate to violence.

However, Senior Supt. Candido Casimiro, provincial police director, downplayed the possibility. He assured that the Comelec is on top of the situation and would find a resolution to the conflict.

"This won't escalate to a violent confrontation among supporters," Casimiro said.

ROUNDUP

Fire guts convent

BAGUIO CITY—The Recollect fathers' convent here, one of the largest seminaries in Northern Luzon, was gutted by a two-hour fire on Monday night. The two-story wood and concrete Casiasico Recoletos was rebuilt by the Recollect fathers in 1957 after it was destroyed during World War II. Arson investigators said no one was hurt in the fire that started at the prefect's office of the seminary. Damage was placed at P2.5 million. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Cops face slay probe

CEBU CITY—Three policemen have been linked to the May 14 killing of a mayoral candidate's supporter in Naga town, 21 kilometers south of this city. PO3 Julito Navales, PO2 Miguel Castañares and SPO2 Tito Suan, all Naga policemen, were placed under camp restriction at the Cebu Provincial Police Office (CPPO) based in this city pending results of the inquiry. "They have been stripped of their badges and are facing summary dismissal proceedings," said Chief Supt. Avelino Rzon, police director for Central Visayas. Pnfilo Herediano, 47, a supporter of Naga Vice Mayor and mayoral candidate Paulino Ong, was shot dead by Navales about 1 p.m. near a public school at a mountain village of Tuyan, 14 km from the town proper.

Canie Fernandez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Police exec relieved

ORMOC CITY—Chief Insp. Gil Duran Loyola was relieved as police chief of Merida town after two of his men were linked to the gun attack on the house of a mayoral candidate on May 14. Chief Supt. Nardito Yoo, police director for Eastern Visayas, also placed under camp restriction SPO2 Orlando Duarte and SPO2 Eddie Macion, both of the Merida police, pending investigation of the shooting incident. Witnesses identified Duarte and Macion as among four men who fired at the house of mayoral candidate Emarito Luzares (Lakas-NUCD) about 1:30 p.m. of May 14.

Felix Codilla III, PDI Visayas Bureau

Massacre suspect

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—A judge has ordered the arrest of the principal suspect in the massacre of four people here last month. Judge Alexander lalut of the municipal trial court did not recommend any bail for Danilo Afalla, 40, who is facing parricide charges for the murder of his wife Aperacion, [illegible]0, and their children Cheenie Claire, 13; Mark Anthony, 11; and Michael Angelo, 5. The victims' decomposing bodies were found by residents in a shallow grave in a riverbank in Barangay Don Mariano Marcos here on April 18. Their heads were bludgeoned and their bodies were wrapped in bed sheets when they were dug up.

Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon and the Western section of the country will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila HI 33° Lo 25°	Baguio HI 25° Lo 16°	Tuguegarao HI 33° Lo 23°	Laoag HI 32° Lo 26°
Clark Zone HI 33° Lo 24°	Tagaytay HI 29° Lo 23°	Legazpi HI 33° Lo 26°	Calapan HI 32° Lo 24°
Bacolod HI 33° Lo 25°	Roxas HI 34° Lo 25°	Cebu HI 32° Lo 26°	Tacloban HI 33° Lo 75°
Gen. Santos HI 32° Lo 24°	Zamboanga HI 31° Lo 24°	Cagayan de Oro HI 33° Lo 23°	Davao HI 33° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research

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Poll protesters stone radio station in Isabela

CAUAYAN CITY—Tension rose at the broadcast center of dzNC Bombo Radyo AM radio and Star FM radio in Barangay Minante II here as 500 ralliers hurled stones, rammed the station's gate and tried to enter the compound on Monday night.

A power outage also heightened the tension as the ralliers took the opportunity to protest the station's alleged bias against the Dy family of Isabela.

Policemen and station guards, however, prevented the ralliers from entering the compound.

Through their emissaries, the ralliers demanded the resignation of Bombo station manager Charmy Sabigan (also known by her radio name Carina Zobel) and asked for her public apology on-air for her alleged biased commentaries on the alleged vote-padding incident in Angadanan town.

The ralliers insisted that the "damaging commentaries" and reports should be replayed in front of them and asked her to refrain from tackling the vote-padding issue.

Sabigan, however, rejected the ralliers' demands when the negotiators, led by Councilors-elect Ruben Tumbaga and Edgardo Atienza, talked with her.

The most controversial among the alleged poll irregularities reported during the May 14 elections was the alleged vote-padding in Angadanan.

The alleged vote-padding has reportedly led to the victory of Rep.-elect Faustino Dy III against former Bombo commentator Ma. Gracia Cielo Padaca.

Sabigan told the INQUIRER that she had sent workers, escorted by policemen, to buy food and other personal stuff as she claimed she was threatened with harm by the ralliers if she leaves the station.

A TRUCKLOAD of protesters joins a 30-vehicle motorcade to denounce alleged vote-padding, massive vote-buying and other election frauds committed in the third congressional district of Isabela.

VILLAMOR VISAYA JR.

At least 20 radio station officials and employees—mostly reporters, production assistants and technicians—were marooned in the station following the rallies.

"We would continue to adhere to the real truth as we have to serve the people of Isabela and other provinces by not suppressing the truth," Sabigan said.

Interior Secretary Jose Lina earlier directed Isabela police officials to augment security at the broadcast center.

Lina also directed policemen to avoid being partisan to political leaders in the province amid reports that some lawmen were allied to the Dy family. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Poll winners: Same names, same families

BY THE PDI NORTHERN LUZON
BUREAU AND CENTRAL LUZON DESK

SINCE 1960, voters of Nueva Ecija have elected only one name for governor of the province: Joson.

First, the late Gov. Eduardo Joson who ruled the province until 1990, then his son Tomas III, followed by Eduardo Nonato and then Tomas III again.

In the May 14 elections, Tomas III was elected by Novo Ecijanos to his second term. There was added flavor, though, in the 1998 and 2001 elections: The voters elected another Joson, Eduardo IV, as vice governor.

In more than four decades and in nine local elections, a big majority of the voters in Nueva Ecija have been writing in their ballots "Joson" for governor.

In that span of years, with a distance of short periods, saw the change of leadership in reining the affairs of the provincial government.

This was in 1986, when an OIC governor was appointed by the Aquino administration but who stayed in office for only one-and-a-half years and when the then incumbent Gov. Eduardo Joson, the family patriarch, died in August 1990.

The elections in 1988 and 1992 marked the return of a Joson to the provincial capitol. A younger son of the late governor won as vice mayor of Cabanatuan City but was killed in an ambush two years later.

The other Joson in the political limelight is Mariano Cristino who has been reelected mayor of Quezon town. Mariano Cristino's wife, Josefina, was also reelected representative of the first district of Nueva Ecija.

As if giving more luster to the Joson's grip of political dominance in the province, 20 town mayors and two city mayors belonging to the Joson-formed political party, Bagong Lakas ng Nueva Ecija (Balane), were elected.

Outsiders ask very often: What is the source of the political magic that the Josons cast upon the voters of Nueva Ecija?

Outgoing Mayor Efren Alvarez of the Science City of Muñoz, who served as provincial administrator of the late Gov. Eduardo Joson, summed up the characteristics of the Joson "magic" which evolved four decades ago and felt by Novo Ecijanos up to the present:

- Strong social services like scholarships, free medicine and hospitalization, free coffins and continuing assistance for the establishment of new school buildings, production of school desks and others.
- Transparency in governance.
- Keeping up with promises
- Continuing efforts to bring further improvements in the province.

Others say that nobody who approaches the Josons for assistance goes home empty-handed.

Tomas III himself told the INQUIRER: "*Kahit paano walang lumalapit na nabibigo. Umuuwi siyang masaya* (No one who approaches me gets disappointed. He or she goes home happy)."

Political analysts in the province say, however, it is because no other political figures approximate or even surpass the Joson charisma and effectiveness with the big number of Nueva Ecija voters that makes the politically strong Josons formidable.

Who that political figure is, it seems that nobody is in sight.

In the recent elections, Governor Joson fielded his eldest son, Edward Thomas, 25, in the congressional race in the third district of the province. The young Joson lost to political neophyte Aurelio Umali, a lawyer and former deputy commissioner of the National Telecommunications Commission.

It was a dent in the political prowess of Joson. But, as observers said, watch out for a more aggressive drive in packaging the younger Josons for their ascent in Nueva Ecija politics.

La Union's Ortegas

The Ortega clan of La Union first entered the political arena in 1901, with the appointment of Don Joaquin Ortega, a Cebu-born businessman, as the first civil governor of the province.

Don Joaquin went on to become the first elected governor of the province, and later, lieutenant governor of the former sub-provinces of Abra, Bontoc and Benguet. He was in public office until 1926, his last post being a special agent of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes.

Two of his sons took after his interest in politics. Francisco served as congressman of the first district for six terms, intermittently from 1935 and 1965. Joaquin Jr. became assemblyman for two terms between 1969 and 1986.

In 1988, Joaquin was elected governor of the province. He was succeeded by his nephew, Justo Ortega Orros Jr., who served for three consecutive terms until this year.

In the recent elections, Orros' cousin Victor Ortega won as governor. The son of Francisco, Victor was a three-term congressman and former deputy House speaker.

When Victor finished his term in Congress, his brother Manuel was elected to his post and would soon begin a second term. Joaquin, Orros and Manuel had all served as mayor of the capital town of San Fernando.

In 1998, Mary Jane Ortega, wife of Victor, joined the mayoral race for the first time and won. She is now on her second term.

The next generation of Ortegas is already being steeped in politics.

These include recently proclaimed board member Jonathan Justo Orros and city councilors Francisco Manuel Ortega (former board member) Mario Lacsamana (reelected), and John Orros. Two other brothers of Victor, Pablo (former councilor) and Francisco Jr. are in the board and council respectively.

Isabela's Dys

The Dy dynasty, established by the late Isabela politico Faustino Dy Sr., has been a hard wall to break in Isabela politics.

According to the 1994 book "The Ties that Bind," the Dys have become synonymous with power and wealth in their home province.

Known as "Ka Tino," Faustino Sr. had served, starting in 1961, as Cauayan councilor and mayor for nine years and Isabela governor from 1972 to 1986 and from 1988 to 1992, and brought about a legacy of political patronage in the province.

The Dy patriarch retired in 1992 and gave way to his son Benjamin who won as governor by a landslide despite the growing opposition from the Catholic Church and environmental groups that campaigned against the family's logging activities.

Before his death in October 1993, Ka Tino made sure that his sons Benjamin, Faustino Jr. and Faustino III would win handily against token candidates, if not unopposed.

But for the 2001 elections, the present generation Dys faced the biggest political threats from strong contenders that their late father never experienced.

After the polls, the strength and power of the Dy family were reasserted as all members of the Dy family who ran for various elective positions in the province won over their respective rivals.

However, the clout of the Dys, according to political observers in the province, suffered a dent as congressional candidates anointed by the Dys--Board Members Simplicio Domingo II in the second district and Giorgidi Aggabao in the fourth district--suffered poll setbacks. Four incumbent mayors allied with the Dys also lost.

Political observers in the province said these poll losses of the Dys' allies were unusual as voters in the province, during the reign of Ka Tino, would vote straight for the Dys and their candidates.

Among the elected Dys in the May 14 polls are brothers Faustino Dy Jr. as governor, three-time Cauayan City Mayor Faustino Dy III as congressman of the third district, Caesar Dy as Cauayan City mayor and Napoleon Dy as Alicia town mayor.

Another brother, outgoing Isabela Gov. Benjamin Dy, said he would rest and forget politics in the meantime.

Faustino Jr. and Napoleon are sons of Faustino Sr. by his first marriage to the late Erlinda Sanchez while Benjamin, Faustino III and Caesar are sons of the Dy patriarch by his second marriage to Natividad de Guzman. *Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Gia Damaso-Dumo and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

The making of an election hot spot

By Gia Damaso-Dumo
La Union

BALAOAN town in La Union, once the cradle of freedom martyrs and heroes, is entered in contemporary history as the lone election hot spot in the province in this year's elections.

Interestingly, according to a history book, Balaoan derived its name from "*bala awan*," meaning "no bullets" in Ilocano.

But its people were far from being without fire, whether in defense of freedom during the Spanish colonial period or in the battle for political power in contemporary times.

It is said that during the Spanish regime, a group of Spanish soldiers on patrol duty happened to stop by a sitio to rest. In that sitio, then named Puraw, curious residents flocked around the fair-skinned soldiers and naively began to examine the guns they carried.

Fearing that the guns might fire by accident, one of them ventured to ask in Ilocano "*Aoan bala*? (Are there no bullets)?" To this, the amiable soldier, attempting to echo the words, uttered, "*Bala-aoan!* (No bullets)!" Since then, the town became known as Balaoan, a name that augured the opposite.

Freedom lovers

In its fiery bosom came the revered "Siete Martires (Seven Martyrs)" at the dawning of the Philippine Revolution against Spain. These freedom lovers were summarily executed by firing squad for supporting the revolutionaries' secret society against the worsening abuses committed by Spanish authorities.

Three of the seven martyrs were Primo, Artemio and Fernando, all surnamed Ostrea, like the town's incumbent Mayor Joaquin Ostrea Jr. The other martyrs were Luciano Resurreccion, Patricio Lopez, Rufino Zambrano and Mariano Peralta—all forebears of contemporary politicians in the town.

Balaoan's chief executive in 1850 was Mateo Ostrea and since then, 11 other Ostreas have served as town mayor.

Joaquin Ostrea Jr. (Lakas-NUCD) recently regained his post after winning by 1,681 votes over his opponent and uncle, Casiano Ledda (LDP), in Monday's polls.

By Balaoan standards, the figure represents a relatively comfortable margin compared with past elections, local political observers say. And this is what makes elections in Balaoan so hot.

In Philippine politics, it is said that the closer the relation, the closer and more dangerous the fight. Ostrea and Ledda are close relatives, and so are their choices for vice mayor, cousins Alfred Concepcion (Lakas-NUCD) and Roben Ledda (LDP).

Casiano Ledda has good reason to maintain a sizable following in Balaoan. His forefather, Paulino Ledda, was mayor of the town in 1852.

A comebacking politician, Casiano held the reigns of power in the town for 24 years intermittently, the longest period of service of any mayor in the town's history.

In 1998, he ran for Congress but lost to former San Fernando City Mayor Manuel Ortega.

No dream assignment

With its political landscape, Balaoan is no law enforcer's dream assignment. But the town police chief, Supt. Florante Rea, who assumed his post only in March, sees his current assignment as a job with one clear mission. To see to it that not one of the political candidates or their followers in his area is harmed or eliminated.

At noon on election day, Rea willingly gave media people a tour of the town's critical areas but not without his pistol and baby Armalite.

Accessible via a one-lane concrete road, Barangays Butubut Este, Norte, Oeste and Sur have a lush landscape with tight rows of towering mahogany trees, interrupted only by low wooden houses sitting beside tobacco kilns made of mud bricks.

There are livestock pens and bundles of firewood behind the houses and patches of tobacco and vegetable farms, and rice paddies among the woods.

A few houses, owned by some businessmen, have concrete fences and visible amenities.

Yet it is in this area of seeming self-sufficiency and calm where many violent incidents have been reported in the last few months.

For here, when darkness falls, the idyllic beauty is quickly replaced by a sense of danger.

Visibly, many areas are still not being served electric power and, at night, even the skylight is often hidden from view by the tree

Gun battle

It was here where, on April 15, police engaged six heavily armed men in an hour-long gun battle that resulted in the death of two of the armed men.

According to local folk, people here, as well as those in the town proper, would usually shut themselves inside their homes come dusk.

Many of the town's residents also owned guns, and these were nc without bullets, they assured.

As early as January, a supporter of Ostrea, Peter Ragmac, was tortured and killed. Early in March, Mario Civar, a follower of Ledda was shot dead in broad daylight at a machine shop.

Ledda himself reportedly survived an ambush along an interior road two weeks after Olivar's murder.

On March 15, Ricky Toletino, a janitor at the municipal building and follower of Ostrea, was murdered in his own house while he was having breakfast with his wife.

About a month later, Ledda' driver was shot in the leg by unknown attackers when he went to the market on an errand.

In a desperate move, a church group initiated the signing of a peace covenant well into the campaign period. But the feuding parties signed it hurriedly and with token cooperation, witnesses said.

"We'll all be eliminated," the INQUIRER quoted Ostrea's running mate Alfred Concepcion, who had urged the Comelec to put the town under its control.

But according to political observers, the feuding family members had less to worry about than their non-relative followers, who have been the real casualties of their struggle for power.

Thus, on April 17, Balaoan became one of six Comelec-controlled areas in the Ilocos region.

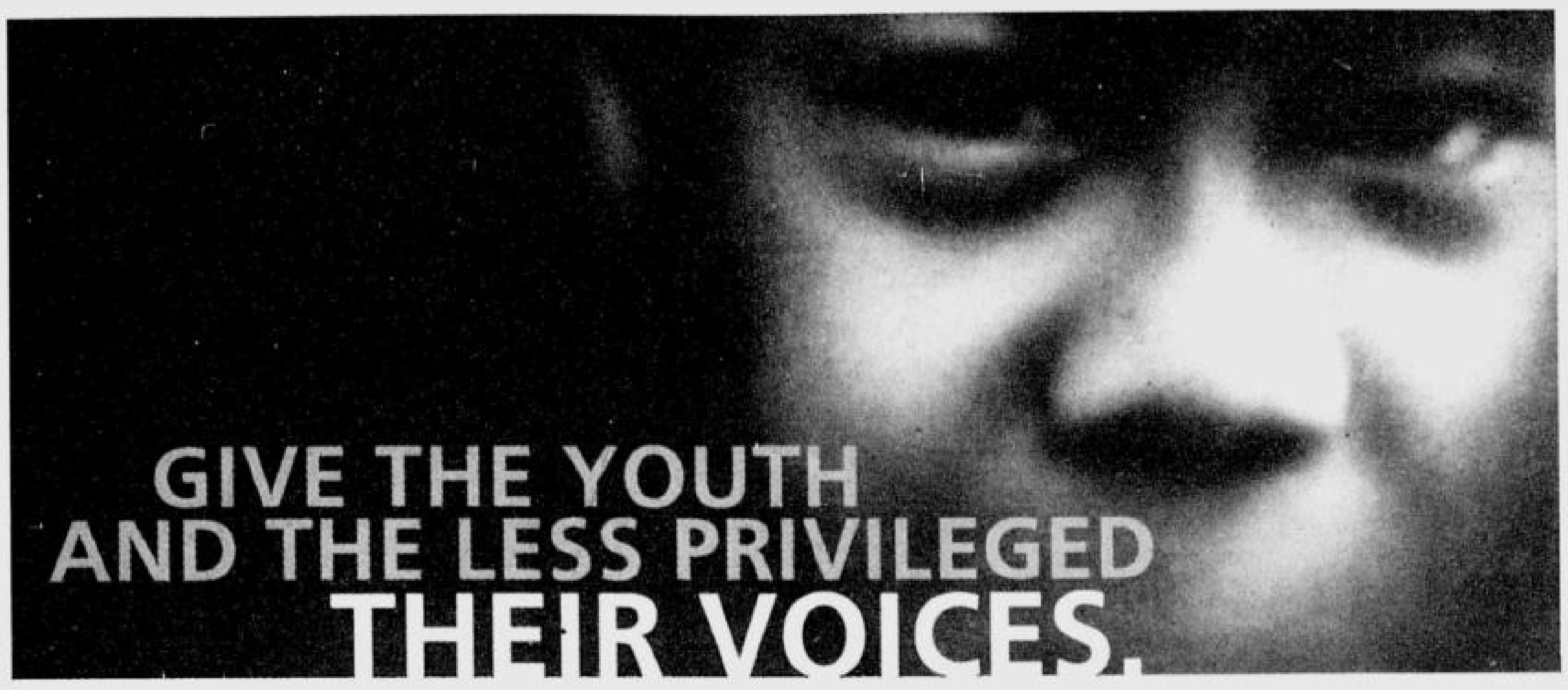
Immediately, the town's police force was augmented by 136 men from the regional and provincial mobile groups, Army and Philippine Air Force

They set up Comelec checkpoints and tirelessly patrolled the villages day and night and often on foot. For added security during the canvassing of votes, the grounds of the municipal building where the ballot boxes from the precints were taken, were lit up "as bright as day."

The counting was carried out almost without stopping. Before noon Wednesday, the tally ended, to the relief of all, without incident. Ostrea garnered 7,800 votes and Ledda 6,119 from 102 voting precincts.

When the winners had been proclaimed and the ballot boxes escorted by police to the provincial capitol in San Fernando City, Rea promptly returned to his post, expecting "aftershocks" from the outcome of the vote.

Surprisingly, the town reportedly had one of the most peaceful elections in the province, living up to its name of "Bala awan."



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Playing politics to Chavit's beat

By Frank Cimatu
Ilocos Sur

IT HAS become a truism in Northern Luzon that you can't beat outgoing Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson in the game of politics. He is so good in the diferent nuances of politics that you can't help but play to his rlythm.

There is the so-called funeral parlor game.

The Singsons of old used to own a funeral parlor in Vigan and Chavit himself went to school to master the art of being a mortician. Now, two local candidates who own funeral parlors did good in the last elections.

Lulu Baquiran, whose family owns Funeraria Baquiran, the oldest funeral parlor in Ilocos Sur, is the number one councilor of Vigan City. Some say her easy rapport with people made her win but her family's easy handling with their dearly departed also contributed to her victory

Another funeral parlor owner who won is Antonio Que, the new vice mayor of San Ildefonso town.

Bus game

Then there is the "bus game," although it got mixed results in the last elections.

Singson's family owns the Partas Bus Lines that ply the Vigan-Manila and Baguio-Laoag routes

Former Rep. Samuel Dangwa, known in the central Cordillera as "The Bus," surprisingly defeated incumbent Rep. Ronald Cosalan in Benguet.

The Dangwas own the Dangwa Bus Co. which for decades was the only bus line plying the Cordillera, thus all buses were then known as Dangwas.

Samuel Dangwa, however, split from the company and formed his own line called Pine Tree. That began Dangwa's slide from the political race, losing twice to Cosalan.

Impeachment game

The Fariñases, who own the Fariñas Bus Lines that ply the Laoag-Manila and Laoag-Baguio routes, got mixed results in the elections.

Incumbent Rep. Rodolfo Fariñas lost in the first district of Ilocos Norte but his brother, Roger, was reelected Laoag City mayor.

The new political game is the "impeachment hearings game" that also got mixed results.

Ilocos Sur Rep. Salacnib Baterina admitted that the impeachment hearings against disgraced President Joseph Estrada boosted his victory over longtime rival, former Rep. Mariano Tajon.

Lawyer Pablito Sanidad, whose court brilliance was also highlighted during the hearings, however lost the congressional race in Baguio City.

Baterina won by more than 6,000 votes over Tajon. In their past two meetings, their difference was 2,00 votes.

"Modesty aside, I also capitalized on the impeachment hearings. In fact, Emma Lim's appearance in my rally won for me Bantay town which was traditionally Tajon's turf," Baterin said.

It was Baterina who ed Lim, Singson's secretary, through two hours of grilling by Estradas lawyer, Estelito Mendoza, over the alleged payment of P5 million to the former president's secretary.

Another Ilocano lawyer who also had jitters during the elections because of Filipino was Pablito Saniod.

"In my 30 years of lawyeing, it was my first time to be made to speak in Filipino." Sanidad revealed.

He handled Singson during the deliberations on the tobacco excise tax where Estrada allegedly took P130 million from thousands of Ilocos Sur farmes.

Although Sanidad wrote about the impeachment trial in his column in the Baguio Midland Courier, it did not o him well among the Baguio voters who he lost to Baguio Mayor Mauricio Domogan.

Singson went to Baguio during the campaign but his appearances were not highlighted. Sanidad also did not ask Singson for campaign funds although the latter was all too willing to help.

Sanidad's handlers decided not to dwell too much on his trial records and instead focused on Baguio's issues, like environment, graft and corruption and the city charter.

"The problem is that Domogan has mastered the art of politics. While you are talking to him, Domogan would pick up a piece of garbage and you are won over. Domogan plays to perfection the game of being quiet and good-natured," Baguio Prosecutor Benedicto Carantes said of Domogan.

‘They tried to hoodwink the media’

(From page A1)

from the nearby house of vice-mayoral candidate Dr. Victor Montecalvo, a supporter of his rival Gov. Madeleine Ong (PPC-Lakas), who is Emil Ong's sister-in-law.

"It's like you take a video tape of a married couple during their romantic time together and you show it to others and say this is proof that rape incidents have increased," Daza said.

But Emil Ong told the INQUIRER: "Why is it that they were the only ones there? Why was there no PPC representation? They did not even invite the PPC lawyer to that supposed canvassing."

Ong contended that the real canvassing was completed at 3 p.m. at the San Isidro municipal hall. He said the footage was taken five hours later when the 37 alleged Daza allies transferred the election returns from the municipal treasurer's office to the San Isidro Sangguniang Bayan session hall.

"Why is that they were acting suspiciously and were always scanning the surroundings with flashlights in hand?" Ong said, referring to portions of the tape showing SPO3 Manuelito Lomcoso peering out of the room with a flashlight.

He accused Daza of being the "mastermind" in the alleged operation to cheat PPC candidates of victory.

"No amount of sugarcoating can overturn the evidence we have shown," he said, adding that the alleged scheme was a "well-planned operation to rig the election returns."

The PPC played the two-hour tape before the media on Monday at its headquarters in Pasig City.

The unnamed PPC supporters caught on camera 37 persons, including candidates, policemen and municipal officers opening ballot boxes. According to Ong, the election returns were being tampered with.

But Daza said Ong's allegation was "unlikely."

"Why would you tamper (with election returns) in the presence of 37 people, plus the municipal board of canvassers?" he said.

Daza pointed out that the PPC identified the members of the board of canvassers, including municipal treasurer Gilda Bulalaque, as among those caught on camera.

Bulalaque is Ong's second cousin, Daza said.

He denied Ong's claim that he and congressman-elect Harlin Abayan (LP, 1st district) watched the canvassing—an act of electioneering—and said he had "never set foot on San Isidro since the elections."

Fearful

The two PPC supporters who took the video footage are now in fear for their lives.

Some of their relatives were allegedly harassed in Northern Samar, and had been brought to Manila by the PPC.

"We can no longer go back home," said one of the two men, adding, however, that he did not regret what he did.

PPC spokesperson Conrado Limcaoco said that the coalition would submit the footage to the Commission on Elections, and that Daza should make his arguments before the poll body.

Earlier, the PPC submitted to the Comelec the allegedly tampered electoral returns in a bid to have the elections in Northern Samar declared a failure.

But Comelec officials, including Juchita Collamar Sy, who was among those seen in the tape, proceeded with the canvassing, saying the PPC petition was lacking in sufficient evidence.

On Monday, the Comelec provincial board of canvassers proclaimed Daza and his two LP allies as winners in the gubernatorial and congressional races.

Daza garnered 92,366 votes against Madeleine Ong's 71,418.

Incumbent Abayon defeated Theodoro Jumamil. Incumbent Romualdo Vicencio (2nd district) also defeated Jose Ong, the governor's brother-in-law.

According to Limcaoco, the footage will greatly boost the case of the PPC, which is now seeking the nullification of the proclamation.

But Daza said he and other opposition candidates, including those running for senator, won fairly in the provincial elections.

He said the PPC lost because "they were dragged down by the Ongs," who, he said, were regarded as *balimbing* (turncoats).

He noted that his being known as one of Joseph Estrada's lawyers at the impeachment trial "probably helped" him.

"To say the least, it didn't hurt," he said.

‘Fixing’

Jesus Crispin Remulla, spokesperson of the Estrada-backed Puwersa ng Masa, yesterday accused retired Gen. Ramon Montano and former Justice Secretary Silvestre Bello of spearheading *dagdag-bawas* (vote padding and shaving) in Northern Luzon.

In a statement issued yesterday, Remulla said the two men associated with former President Fidel Ramos were engaged in "fixing" operations particularly in Isabela province, to ensure the victory of PPC senatorial candidate Ralph Recto.

He said Montaño and Bello were coordinating with winning Lakas-NUCD congressional candidate Edwin Uy (2nd district, Isabela) and the regional board of canvassers.

In response, Bello said: "I completely deny allegations of involvement in election irregularities. I have not even seen the shadow of Montaño. I was in Isabela during the elections. Except for casting my vote there, I was never near any area where the canvassing of election returns was being held."

Remulla also claimed that Public Works secretary Simeon Datumanong had called on opposition Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilanggalen to conduct *dagdag-bawas* for Recto.

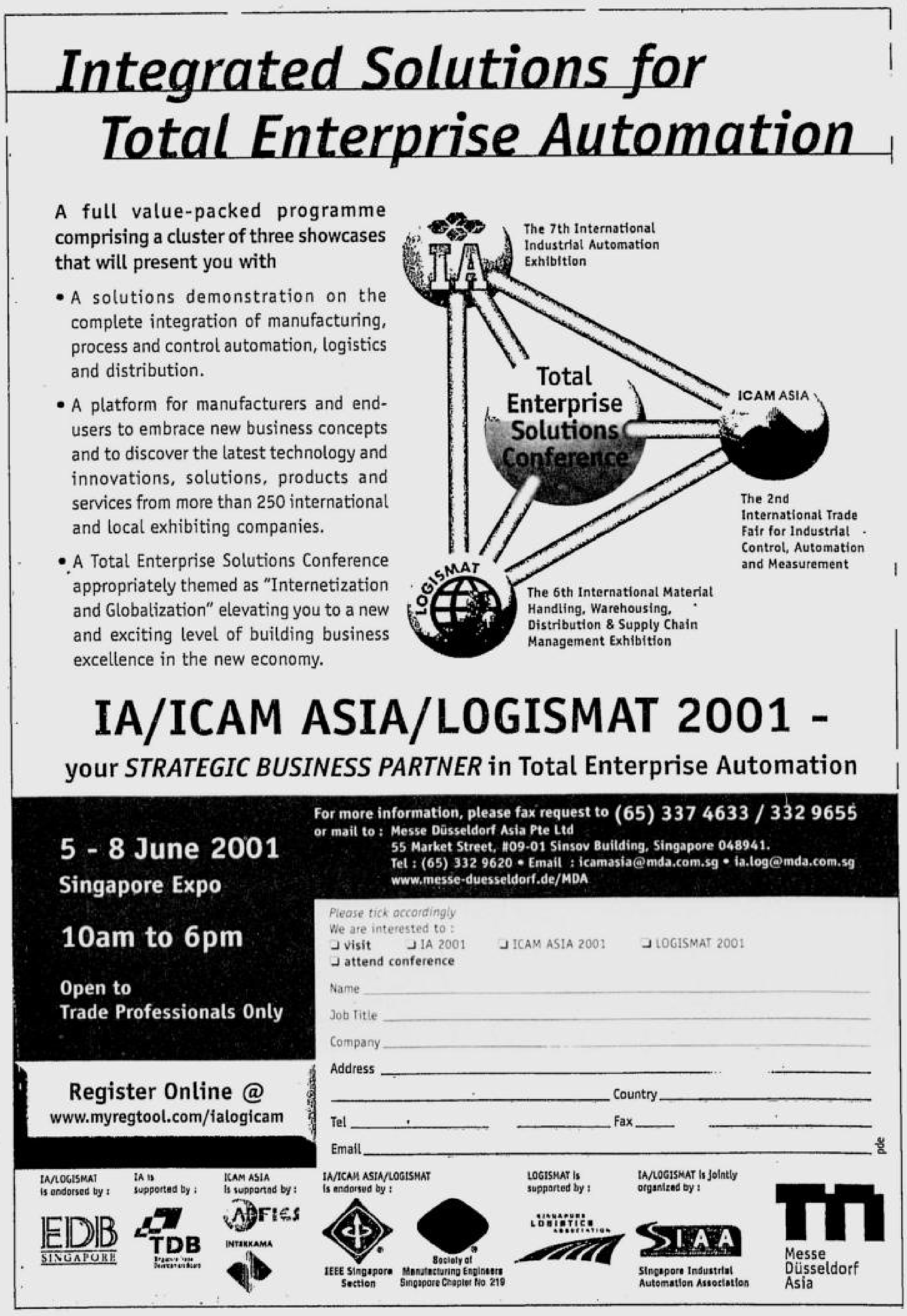
He said he was told by "reliable sources" at the Department of Public Works and Highways that President Macapagal-Arroyo had "personally pestered" Datumanong "to do something for Recto."

In Davao City, the archdiocese-led Solidarity for Political Transformation (Solid Davao) appealed to both the PPC and the PnM to stop trading allegations of fraud before the media.

Solid Davao convenor Fr. Leonardo Dublan said the two camps should take their complaints to the Comelec and judicial bodies if they had the evidence.

"Allegations of fraud are regular fare in every election, but how many of these have actually been proven in court? In the meantime, our nation is being torn apart as candidates trade barbs," Dublan said.

He warned that if the "word war" continued, more incidences of violence could result. *With reports from Carlito Pablo in Manila; Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau*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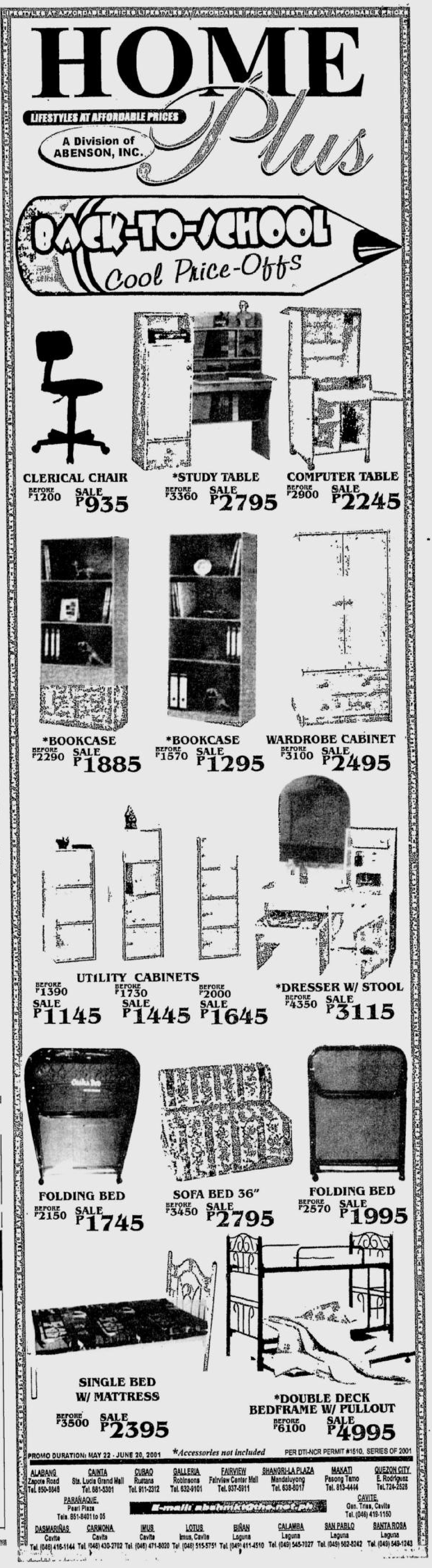
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Convicted child rapist is congressman again

(From page A1)

time with from June to July in 1996 at his Ritz Towers condominium unit in Makati.

Jalosjos, who continues to deny the charges, has appealed his conviction in the Supreme Court.

In 1998, he campaigned from prison and won a second term. He said he was not surprised by his latest victory.

According to the NBP public information officer Supt. Venjo Tesorio, Jalosjos was in "high spirits because of his victory. He even boasted that he got a wider winning margin than when he ran for office before his conviction."

Jalosjos said his victory endeared his people to him deeply.

"I'm hopeless, but they still gave me an opportunity," he said. "I can't find the words to describe how I feel."

In April, after learning that Jalosjos had filed his certificate of candidacy, Senate Minority Leader Rene Cayetano called for the passage of a law banning convicted capital offenders from running for public office.

Projects

"My constituents couldn't see me in person, but they could feel the results of my decisions," Jalosjos told The Associated Press by telephone from prison.

He outlined a number of projects which were completed through his supervision from behind bars, including construction of roads, bridges, a town hall, a child-care center and a school.

Although restricted, the 60-year-old Jalosjos said he was still able to serve his people "by mail, by phone and in person," explaining throngs of local officials and residents from his province visit him in prison to convey "1,001 problems" weekly.

Office hours

Prison officials have allowed him to hold office in a visiting area where he meets with a secretary and other people during office hours.

He had petitioned the court to allow him to attend congressional sessions under guard, arguing his constituents have a right to congressional representation. Then President Joseph Estrada had supported the request.

The court, however, denied it, ruling that those who voted for Jalosjos were aware his functions would be limited by his imprisonment.

Two years ago, justice department officials ordered Jalosjos moved from a cell with hotel-like amenities, including a tennis court, a color TV, stereo system, treadmill and private kitchen, reprimanding prison officials who provided him the perks.

Jalosjos was doing brisk business on the side with his hamburger stand. *Reports from Alcuin Papa and AP*

Pro-GMA lawmakers . . .

(From page A1)

for Free Elections and the Commission on Elections at press time.

In Northern Luzon, 13 of those elected belong to Lakas and LP, 10 to the NPC-LDP coalition, and one each to the PDSP and Reporma-LM. Two are independents.

The Lakas winners are Mauricio Domogan of the lone district of Baguio City and Manuel Mamba of Cagayan's third district.

In Isabela, three of the four seats were won by Lakas' Rodolfo Albano Jr., Edwin Uy and Antonio Abaya.

In the Ilocos, the administration winners are Roque Ablan Jr. (Ilocos Norte), Salacnib Baterina (Ilocos Sur), and Amado Espino Jr. and Jose de Venecia Jr. (Pangasinan).

The LP, a party affiliated with the administration's People Power Coalition (PPC), has four of its candidates assured of victory. They are Florencio Abad (Batanes), Solomon Chungalao (Ifugao), Junie Cua (Quirino) and Eric Singson (Ilocos Sur).

NPC-LDP candidates who won are Elias Bulut Jr. (Apayao); Roy Pilando (Mt. Province); Celia Layus (Cagayan), Faustino Dy III (Isabela); Carlos Padilla (Nueva Vizcaya); Manuel Ortega and Tomas Dumpit (La Union); and Generoso Tulagan, Marcos Cojuangco and Conrado Estrella III (Pangasinan).

The winning independents are Juan "Jackie" Ponce Enrile Jr. (Cagayan) and Arthur Celeste (Pangasinan).

Enrile, son of opposition Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, is known to be politically independent of his father. He was among those who signed the Articles of Impeachment against then President Joseph Estrada, while his father was among Estrada's staunch defenders at the aborted impeachment trial.

Also elected were Luis Bersamin Jr. (PDSP) of Abra and Samuel Dangwa (Reporma-LM) of Benguet.

Reelected Rep. Imee Marcos (Ilocos Norte) belongs to the KBL established by her father, the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos.

The Marcoses, despite their alliance with Lakas for the May 14 elections, are known to be sympathetic to Estrada.

Central Luzon

Lakas and its allies are getting nine of 19 available seats in Central Luzon. The NPC-LDP coalition has eight seats and the independents, two seats.

The administration candidates elected in the region are Wilhelmino Sy-Alvarado, Lorna Silverio and Reylina Nicolas (Bulacan); Eleuterio Violago (Nueva Ecija); Oscar Rodriguez (Pampanga); Jesli Lapus (Tarlac); and James Gordon Jr. (Zambales).

The allies elected are Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III (LP) of Tarlac and Wilfrido Villarama (Aksyon) of Bulacan.

The opposition winners are Enrique Garcia Jr. (Bataan); Josefina Joson, Aurelio Umali and Raul Villareal (Nueva Ecija); Francis Nepomuceno, Zenaida Cruz-Ducut and Juan Pablo Bondoc (Pampanga); and Gilberto Teodoro Jr. (Tarlac).

The winning independents are Antonino Roman (Bataan) and Ruben Torres (Zambales).

Roman is a cousin and known ally of Bataan Gov. Leonardo Roman (NPC). Torres, on the other hand, served as executive secretary of then President Fidel Ramos, Lakas chair emeritus.

Resistance to the administration is expected to come mostly from Bataan and Nueva Ecija, where Estrada's known allies, the Romans and Josons, continue to reign in local politics.

Southern Luzon

In Southern Luzon, PPC candidates took 21 of the 34 seats, and the opposition, 12. One winner is an independent.

Although the opposition Puwersa ng Masa (PnM) did not directly field candidates, its allied parties, the NPC and LDP, have the majority of the winners.

The NPC has Francis Escudero (Sorsogon); Joseph Santiago (Catanduanes); and Vida Espinosa, Emilio Espinosa Jr. and Fausto Sintchon (Masbate). The LDP has Salvio Fortuno (Camarines Sur).

The PPC-Lakas-Aksyon has Rolando Andaya, Sulpicio Roco Jr. and Feliz Alfelor Jr. (Camarines Sur), Renato Unico Jr., (Camarines Norte); and Krisel Lagman-Luistro (Albay).

The coalition is wooing independent Jose Solis of Sorsogon.

In Southern Tagalog, the PPC and its allied parties dominated the races.

All four seats in Batangas were taken by PPC allies Lakas (Elenita Ermita-Buhain, Francisco Perez II and Oscar Gozos) and Reporma (Victoria Reyes).

In Quezon, PPC allies took three of the four seats (Rafael Nantes, Lynette Punzalan and Aleta Suarez).

The PPC captured one of the three seats in Cavite (Plaridel Abaya), the lone seat in Marinduque (Edmundo Reyes Jr.) and the two seats in Oriental Mindoro (Charity Leviste and Alfonso Umali Jr.)

In Laguna, it is still a toss-up in two of the four races. Joaquin Chipeco and Danton Bueser are with the administration coalition, while Joaquin Uliran and Rodolfo San Luis are with the NPC and LDP.

Visayas

More than half of the PPC-backed candidates won or are leading in the three Visayas regions.

Of the 42 seats, 25 were won or dominated by the PPC-allied candidates. Only three won under the PnM.

Fifteen of those who won or are leading cannot be considered pro-administration as most are backed by Estrada's close friend, businessman Eduardo Cojuangco, and Sen. John Osmeña.

Cojuangco's candidates ran under the United Negros Alliance (UNA) and the NPC in Negros. Those allied with Osmeña ran under the regional party Alayon in Cebu.

The latest tallies culled from the returns canvassed by the Comelec and Namfrel showed PPC victories in Antique, Capiz, Iloilo, Guimaras, Negros Oriental, Siquijor and Southern Leyte, and leads in Leyte and the cities of Cebu, Bacolod and Iloilo.

The PPC-backed winners are Exequiel Javier (Antique); Rodrigues Dadidas and Eredenil Castrol (Capiz); Augusto Syjuco, Arthur Defensor, Ferjinel Biron, Rolex Suplico and Niel Tupas (Iloilo); Jose Lozada (Negros Occidental); Jacinto Paras and Herminio Teves (Negros Oriental); Orlando Fua Jr. (Siquijor); Roberto Cajes (Bohol); Trinidad Apostol (Leyte); Anecito Saludo (Southern Leyte); Clavel Asas-Martinez (Cebu); and Monico Fuentebella (Bacolod City).

Leading in the count are Edgar Espinosa (Guimaras); Raul del Mar and Antonio Cuenco (Cebu City), and Eufrocino Codilla Sr. (Leyte).

The PnM candidates who won are Gabrielle Calizo (Aklan), Marcelino Libanan (Eastern Samar) and Harlin Abayon (Northern Samar).

Five of the six seats in Negros Occidental were won by UNA candidates Jules Ledesma IV, Jose Carlos Lacson, Carlos Cojuangco, Genaro Alvarez and Alfredo Marañon.

In Negros Oriental, one of the three seats was won by NPC-backed Emilio Macias, also a Cojuangco ally.

In Cebu, five of the six seats were won or are being dominated by Alayon candidates—Jose Gullas, Simeon Kintanar, Antonio Yapha, Joseph Durano and Nerissa Soon-Ruiz.

Other winners or leaders in the count who are not allied with the PPC or the PnM are Oscar Garin (NPC-Iloilo); Edgar Chatto and Eladio Jala (PDP-Bohol), both identified with Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr.); Failon (Leyte), an independent; Edward Veloso (Leyte), who ran under NPC-KBL; and Gerry Espina (Biliran), who ran under his own party Bando Espina.

Mindanao

The Lakas-PPC has the numbers in terms of proclaimed House members in Mindanao.

As of Monday, the PnM had only six winners—Leovigildo Banaag (Agusan del Norte), Rodolfo Plaza (Agusan del Sur), Augusto Baculio (Misamis Oriental), Darlene Antonio-Custodio (South Cotabato) and Arthur Pingoy Jr. (South Cotabato).

The NPC has five winning candidates. But Davao del Sur Rep. Douglas Cagas said "the whole NPC is supportive" of the Macapagal administration.

Other NPC winners are Claude Bautista (Davao del Sur); Jordan Jesus Romualdo (Camiguin), Corazon Malanyaon (Davao Oriental) and Gregorio Ipong (North Cotabato).

The Lakas winners are Joel Mayo Almario (Davao Oriental); Glenda Ecleo and "Spice Boy" Robert Ace Barbers (Surigao del Norte); Isidoro Real Jr. and Felomina San Juan (Zamboanga del Sur); Manuel Zamora and Prospero Amatong (Compostela Valley); Arel Olano and Antonio Floirendo (Davao del Norte); Oscar Moreno (Misamis Oriental); "Spice Boy" Juan Miguel Zubiri and Berthobal Ancheta (Bukidnon); Edelmiro Amante (Agusan del Norte); Erwin Chiongbian (Sarangani); and Belma Cabilao (Zamboanga-Sibugay)

Bukidnon Rep. Nereus Acosta (LP) was reelected.

As of Monday, only one independent, Emmylou Taliño-Santos (North Cotabato) had been proclaimed. *Estanislao Caldez, Juliet Cataluña, Cristina Arzadon, Yolanda Fuertes, Leoncio Balbin Jr., Gia Damaso-Dumo, Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Tonette Orejas, Carmela Reyes, Anselmo Roque, Greg Refraccion and Ronald Dizon, PDI Central Luzon Desk; and Floreno G. Solmirano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

SSS says it profited from loans

(From page A1)

money because it needed money. And in the process, it made money? Bull...," they said.

They urged the Ombudsman and the Presidential Commission Against Graft and Corruption to look into Templo's role in the SSS investments in Belle Corp., the controversial gaming and property firm, during the Estrada administration.

Vitaliano Nañagas, SSS president and chair, assured SSS members "there's nothing to worry about. The SSS did not run out of money."

Nañagas made the assurance when asked about the P7.4 billion that the pension fund for employees in the private sector borrowed last year.

"There's nothing irregular in the so-called (SSS) borrowings," Nañagas told the INQUIRER in a phone interview as he also dismissed moves by some sectors to link the SSS liquidity problems to alleged heavy losses by the agency from bad investments during the Estrada administration.

The Ombudsman is looking into reports that the 23-million member SSS lost close to more than P150 million when it bought 149 million shares of the controversial gaming and property firm, Belle Resources, in December 1998.

Carlos Arellano, Nañagas' predecessor, had told government investigators that in 1999 the SSS was forced to invest nearly P745 million in Belle Corp. due to "repeated pressure" from then President Joseph Estrada.

For his part, Willy Ocier, a close associate of Estrada, had claimed that Estrada earned at least P189 million in commission from the sale of Belle shares to the SSS.

But yesterday, Templo asked: "SSS losses? What are they talking about?"

Unfortunate

Templo, one of the top SSS officials who authorized the pension fund's investment in Belle Corp., said it was "unfortunate that without full understanding of the facts some uninformed sources would sound the alarm and claim that heavy losses forced SSS to borrow."

Last month, the new SSS management admitted that the pension fund lost P8 billion from its P50-billion investment in publicly listed stocks last year.

Also last year, the SSS experienced a P3.5-billion "negative position" because actual benefits extended to members exceeded contributions.

To help ensure the financial viability of the SSS, Malacañang proposed last month that monthly contributions to the pension fund be raised gradually starting this year. But opposition to the proposal forced the Palace to scuttle the plan.

In the SSS advisory, Templo said the SSS borrowings were "legal and went through the process of board presentation and approval."

"They are documented," he said.

For the first time in its 44-year history, the SSS was forced to borrow billions last year because of liquidity problems, according to documents obtained by this paper.

The pension fund drew the P7.4-billion loan in the form of short-term credit lines from the Land Bank of the Philippines, the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. and the First Metro Investment Corp.

Although there is no provision in its charter that authorizes the SSS to borrow money, Arellano ordered the borrowing on Jan. 7, 2000. In a memorandum, Arellano said the loans, with repayment periods of not more than one year, were necessary to "satisfy the liquidity requirements of the SSS."

Templo pointed out that the SSS "earned a net P260.9 million out of these borrowings. Instead of selling its government securities, SSS held on to them and borrowed using them as security."

"It received (a) total income of P1.6 billion from these government securities that were assigned as security to borrowings to which it paid only P1.34 billion," he said.

Borrower and lender

Templo explained that "in the process of managing its liquidity in those transactions which matched borrowings with government securities, the SSS was able to place no less than P18.3 billion in government securities. As the SSS borrowed, it was lending to government."

"Borrowing in the short-term is a sound and typical corporate activity that does not imply problems. It is practiced by many progressive companies such as the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and San Miguel Corp., to name some," he said.

Templo said, "it is indeed hard to explain the soundness of (borrowing) to the public because anyway, the government, as it borrows through the issuance of Treasury bills and the like, has gained more critics than admirers. However laudable projects such as the securitization of housing mortgages, stock lending and other sound ways of raising funds will likewise have to be dropped because they are also forms of borrowing."

SSS insiders said government investigators should look into Templo's role in the SSS investments in Belle Corp.

"Arellano did not do it alone. He was part of a team which included Templo, among others," an SSS official said.

"They should also investigate top SSS executives who received bonuses and other perks simply because they were privy to the Belle transactions, like a secretary who's now drawing a salary of more than P110,000 a month," another SSS insider said.

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Finals not a done deal–Barrios

ACTING PBA Commissioner Sonny Barrios brushed aside insinuations that the recent San Miguel Beer-Barangay Ginebra title showdown was a done deal.

Speaking at yesterday's PSA Forum, Barrios said: "There was no such thing as 'bigayan' (giving away games). The rivalry and the intensity whenever the two teams meet, even in the past, were evident during the Finals series."

San Miguel Beer pocketed the PBA All-Filipino crown, 4-2. It won Games 1 and 2 but Barangay Ginebra came back to capture Games 3 and 4. SMB grabbed Games 5 and 6 to win its 16th PBA title as a pioneer of the league. The PBA was born in 1975.

Barrios, the PBA executive director, took over the reins from Commissioner Jun Bernardino, who suffered from hypertension just days before the Finas started.

PBA Chair Ignatius Yenko shared Barrios' observation. He said the fact that 17,511 paying fans came to watch Game 6 was proof that the championship clash was for real.

Yenko, Mobiline's representative to the PBA Board, also said the improvement in gate attendance from the quarterfinals up to the finals showed that professional basketball "is still the best form of entertainment in the country."

Gate attendance improved from 13 percent in the quarterfinals to 12 percent in the semifinals. The improvement surged to 18 percent in the finals.

Apart from the PBA's success at the gates, Yenko said the PBA is set to employ a stricter policy with respect to the acquisition of imports to ensure a competitive and more entertaining tournament.

"We have to remind the teams that they should hire quality imports because getting the right imports will sustain the success of the league," said Yenko.

The height-measurement of imports for the Second Conference due to start on June 3 will be on May 29 at the PBA offices at Philsports. The height limit is 6-foot-8.

Gerry fight in Manila needs ₱18M

By Al S. Mendoza

IN 90 days, Gerry Peñalosa will meet Masamori Tokuyama of Japan for the World Boxing Council flyweight title.

This was announced yesterday by lawyer Rudy Salud, Peñalosa's manager.

Salud said he wants the fight held here "to give our people a world championship classic."

But Salud said he would need at least P18 million to stage the fight.

"It can be done," Salud said, "especially if our friends from both government and private sectors would unselfishly lend a helping hand."

Salud, who was a former commissioner of the Philippine Basketball Association, said he would not entertain any plan to postpone the fight.

"I don't believe Tokuyama hurt his hand when he knocked out In Joo Cho last weekend," said Salud. "I think that is just a ploy so that the Japanese can have one more tune-up fight before he meets our very own Gerry."

A tuneup fight for Tokuyama would enable him to earn more money before he makes his mandatory defense against Peñalosa, the No. 1 challenger who is also the reigning WBC international flyweight champion.

Peñalosa, who is on a roll with three knockout wins in his three fights, said he could take on Tokuyama "anywhere, anytime."

Salud was seated at ringside when defending champion Tokuyama knocked out Cho in the fifth round in Seoul.

Cho was the same man who beat Peñalosa twice on points in title fights held in Seoul, the last one in January 2000.

Salud said his position to object to the postponement of the Tokuyama-Peñalosa fight has the support of WBC representative Major Lee of South Korea and Masao Kojima of the Japan Boxing Commission.

Salud likewise said that he has the backing of WBC chair Jose Sulaiman, who called up from Mexico to tell Salud that "nobody fights anybody else until they meet."

Salud said the title fight would be probably held in late August or early September.

If Salud and Tokuyama's manager fail to strike a purse for the fight, both will fly to Mexico for a purse bid.

WEST FINALS

Lakers repeat over Spurs

SAN ANTONIO —The Los Angeles Lakers took San Antonio's best shot and are still standing.

The Lakers, down by as many as 14 points in the first half, outscored the Spurs 13-5 in the final 6:11 for an 88-81 victory Monday night and a 2-0 lead in the Western Conference finals.

Kobe Bryant led the way for Los Angeles again, but he got plenty of help from role players to overcome Tim Duncan's career playoff-high 40 points and give the Lakers their 17th consecutive victory _ ninth in the playoffs.

Bryant followed his 45-point performance in Game 1 with 28 points, including a 3-pointer with 1:10 to play that put Los Angeles ahead 85-78.

The Lakers can sweep San Antonio with a pair of homecourt victories in the best-of-seven series. Game 3 is Friday night at the Staples Center.

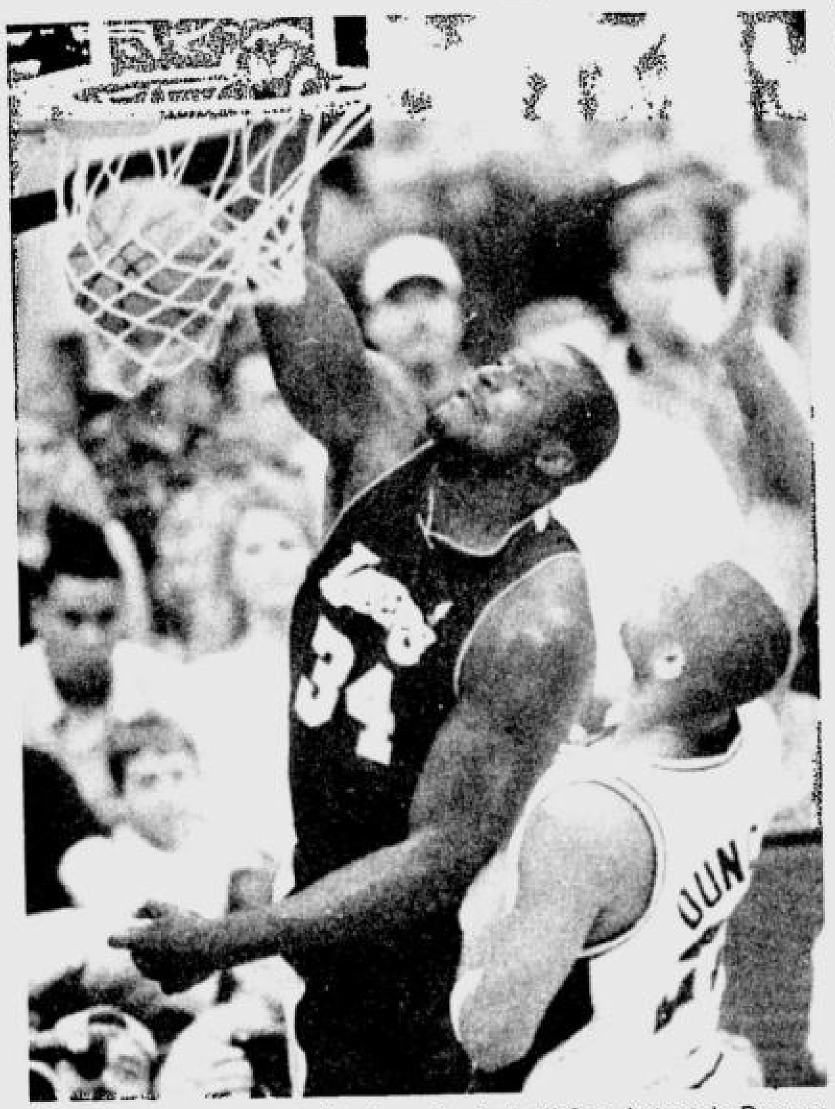
Coach Phil Jackson wasn't around to see the end of the intense, rough win in Game 2. He drew two technical fouls in a five-minute span of the third quarter and was ejected with 3:59 left in the period.

Duncan grabbed 15 rebounds for the Spurs, while Antonio Daniels added 24 points, a career playoff high. Both were perfect from the foul line _ Daniels 12-for-12 and Duncan 9-for-9. *AP*

Philly fans go wild

PHILADELPHIA —Fans flew across the aisles and tackled friends in the stands. Fireworks went off inside the First Union Center. Strangers hugged. Horns honked all the way up Broad Street in the heart of the city.

Philadelphia erupted intb celebration after the 76ers defeated the Toronto Raptors 88-87 Sunday to advance to their first conference finals since Charles Barkley's rookie season in 1985. *AP*



LOS Angeles' O'Neal (left) slams the ball off San Antonio's Duncan in Game 2 of their NBA Western Conference Finals. Los Angeles won, 88-81, for a 2-0 lead in the best-of-seven series. AP

Blitz 3 to promote better team defense

"BLITZ 3 will force teams to improve their defense," opines MBA Commissioner Gregorio "Ogie" Narvasa II to counter fears that the new MBA rule will make teams weak in defense and focus on making points.

The Blitz 3 is an MBA rule innovation to be implemented starting June 3 when the league opens its 2001 season. It gives three points for a basket converted "from anywhere on the court" if it is made within the first four seconds of possession called the Blitz Period.

"This will make for a faster game and the coaches will have more options in the endgame than the usual quick foul-quick conversion of the past."

During test runs in tune-up games, final scores were both in the 100s with only about five points directly resulting from Blitz 3 conversions.

"What the Blitz 3 has done is to maximize the use of the shot clock. Teams are making better use of their 23 seconds by not wasting the first four on just bringing the ball downcourt."

According to Narvasa, with the Blitz 3, one cannot simply press without taking into account the possibility of an outlet pass and a quick conversion.

Abadia, Ruel gain 3rd round

TOP seed Adelo Abadia outplayed Randy de Guzman, 6-3, 7-5, and No. 3 Rolando Ruel Jr. downed Joseph Arcilla, 6-3, 6-0, yesterday to reach the third round of the P120,000 TMS Shipping Agency National Open tennis Championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Also advancing were No. 4 Jessie Lapore, who beat Ricardo Lagac, 6-0, 2-0 (ret.), No. 5 Pio Tolentino, who defeated Chase Tinio, 6-4, 6-4, and No. 6 Joseph Victorino, who clobbered Elbeto Anasta, 6-2, 6-2.

Other winners in the men's singles division offering P20,000 to the champion were No. 8 Pop Sabandon over Johan Guba, 6-1, 6-2, No. 10 Antonio Sagansay over John Amita, 6-0, 6-0, No. 11 Ronald Paz over Jefferson Lee, 7-6 (5), 6-3, No. 12 Frederick Morgan over Carlo Manalastas, 6-4, 6-2, No. 14 Cris Cuarto over Conrado Amita, 6-0, 6-0, and No. 16 Jaime Solon over Al Valderamos, 6-1, 6-0.

US bets hit town for derby

A TOUGH cast of seasoned cockers from the United States are already in town to challenge local *sabong* stars via the "Mandaluyong Coliseum 9-Cock International Derby" on May 29, 31 and June 2.

Major sponsors are Sagupaan Super Feeds and Red Bull Energy Drink in cooperation with Washout Shampoo while derby hosts are Vic Yu and engineer Sonny Lagon.

The Americans are Richard Wilburn, Jerry Douglas, Bobby Jones of Texas, Buddy Mann of Alabama and Chuck Berry of Oklahoma who ruled the Mandaluyong 9-Cock International Derby in January.

Founders' race now Prieto Cup

CHAMPIONSHIP horse racing action returns to the San Lazaro Hippodrome this Sunday as the Manila Jockey Club Inc. marks its 134th founding anniversary with the staging of the much-awaited "1867 Founders' Cup" Stakes Race.

This annual event, which was first run in 1977, pays tribute to the original founders of the Manila Jockey Club, the so-called socio *fundadores* which organized the first horse racing club in the Far East in 1867.

"The staging of the 1867 Founders' Cup Stakes Race is our way of expressing our gratitude to the different sectors of the horse racing industry, most notably to the racing fans, who have patronized the Club for more than a century," said Manila Jockey Club Inc. (MJCI) president Alfonso R. Reyno Jr.

Reyno also announced that this year's staging of the "1867 Founders' Cup" would now be known as the "Prieto Cup," in tribute to the distinguished members of the Prieto clan which were among the original incorporators of the Manila Jockey Club.

The surprise announcement was made by Reyno in the presence of MJCI chair Emeritus Leopoldo Prieto, who was visibly moved by the kind gesture

Ateneo vs La Salle

THE BLUE Eagles will defend the title they grabbed from the Green Archers last year in an exciting dual meet set May 30-31 at the north and south courses of the Canlubang Golf and Country Club.

Both schools will be fielding in their top gunners who bagged the major awards last year.

Leading the way for Ateneo are Kit Lopez for the 29 years and below, Mari Hechanova for the 40-49 years and Hedy Gaisano See for the ladies. Spearheading La Salle are Dan Salvador III for the 30-39 years, Francis Gaston for the 50-59 years and Alex Montelibano for the 60 years and over.

Two new divisions have been added to this year's tourney backed by PLDT, Union Bank Visa, Smart and the National Sports Grille. They are the 19 years and below and 66 years and over. Last year's 29 and below has been reformatted to 20-29 years, same with last year's 60 years and over to 60-65 years.

SPORTSWATCH

Yuchengco golf May 30

THE Ambassador Alfonso T. Yuchengco-NAMA Golf Cup is set for Wednesday, May 30, at the Legends course of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club. Organized by the alumni of Mapua Institute of Technology through the National Association of Mapua Alumni (NAMA), the golf tournament is the first major one for Mapuans and friends. The tournament is being hosted by the Mechanical Engineering Alumni Association (MEAAMIT) led by Antonio R.O. Herrera.

Monte Vista advances

MONTE Vista displayed grace under pressure as it came through with a solid 275-point output to thwart the backdoor bid of Casa Verde and join the two teams from Greenhills in the grand championship of the Alaxan Intervillage golf series at Valley Golf Club Monday. Starting the final round of the elims for the East sector just two points ahead of Casa Verde, the Monte Vista golfers leaned on the consistent game of Paolo Panlilio and the resurgent Ros Sibal and Rene Pantangco to secure the third and last berth in the finals.

Gomez, Mariano win anew

IN CONTRASTING fashion, Iking John Paul Gomez and collegiate standout Carmina Joy Mariano both remained unscathed to cop the solo lead in their respective divisions after four rounds of the 2001 National Age Group Chess Championships in Mandaluyong City yesterday. Fourteen-year-old Gomez won by default over Philippine Christian University's Chester Yonzon while Mariano, the University of the East's top player, took bested Far Eastern University's Lenında del Rosario.

Thunderbird, 3 others ahead

THUNDERBIRD Firefly II of Big Dome owner Jorge "Nene" Araneta and Jima Clear Cut of Pampanga's popular Jingco and Madlambayan brothers towed three other unbeaten entries into the four-cock finals tonight of the NCA (National Cockers Association) 7-Cock Derby at the Araneta Coliseum.

Beach football series launched

THE REXONA National Beach Football Series was formally launched recently at Hotel La Corona, Manila. Organized by the Beach Football Association of the Philippines, the event is slated at the Subic Freeport Zone. Present during the launching were BFAP president Mike Athab, Ground Zero president Albert Almendralejas and Rexona assistant brand manager Gara Santos.

The Philracom Report

(July 1998 to the present as submitted by Benedicto K. Katigbak, Chairman)

The Philippine Racing Commission is an agency under the Office of the President. It is considered one of the revenue generating agencies of the government and has proven its generating capacity for the past years.

I. INCREASED GROSS SALES AND REVENUE FOR THE GOVERNMENT. Chairman Benedicto Katigbak was appointed Chairman of the Philippine Racing Commission last July 2, 1998. At the time, the Commission was appropriated by Congress with a very limited budget of EIGHTEEN MILLION THIRTY SIX THOUSAND (P18,036,000.00). At the same time, the horseracing industry was also fragmented because of the rift going on among the sectors of the industry. The horseracing industry faced rough sailing because of the very small budget from the government coupled with the atmosphere prevailing in the industry.

Despite these problems however, Chairman Katigbak was determined to solidify the entire industry and foremost, he was determined to produce bigger revenues for the government. Records showed that despite of the budgetary cuts, the Commission registered gross sales for 1998 reached THREE BILION, SEVEN HUNDRED SIXTY FOUR MILLION, EIGHT HUNDRED EIGHTY FIVE THOUSAND AND FIVE HUNDRED SIXTY SIX (P3,764,885,566.00) and registered a growth rate of 31.05%. The government revenue was P687,859,879.93. Summing it up, for every one peso budget from the government, there was a return of TWO HUNDRED FOUR PESOS AND NINETY CENTAVOS (P204.90) from the horseracing industry.

In 1999 there was again a marked increase in terms of sales when the horseracing industry posted gross sales of FOUR BILLION, ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN MILLION ONE HUNDRED FIVE THOUSAND AND ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIVE PESOS (P4,118,105,125.00) equivalent to a 9.38% increase. The revenue generated for the government reached P751,668,282.49, equivalent to a 9.28% increase. In 1999, for every one peso budget given to the horse racing industry, there was a return of P225.19.

For the year 2000, the budget of the Commission was decreased by almost a million pesos. However, despite the cut in its budget, the horseracing industry nevertheless posted a remarkable P4,587,691,850.00 in its gross sales and registered a 11.40% increase in sales. The revenue generated was P839,370,725.88. Through the collective efforts of the Commission and with the help and cooperation of the sectors of the industry, the decrease in its budget did not affect its goal of generating higher revenues.

For the current year, the Philippine Racing Commission is projecting at least FIVE BILLION PESOS (5B) in gross industry sales and government revenues of P900M. In fact, the horseracing industry is very optimistic that it will reach its target before the year ends. For the first quarter of this year (January to March 2001), the horseracing industry posted sales of P1,345,076,187.00 as compared to the first quarter sales of P1,113,946.445 for the year 2000. There is already an increase of P20.75% for the first quarter of 2001 as compared to the first quarter of year 2000. Given this first quarter performance, the Commission is very confident that it will be able to deliver its projected 5Billion in sales and 900 million revenues for the government.

Chairman Katigbak and the present Philracom Board believe that the reason behind the increased revenues of the horseracing industry to the government is attributable to the positive response of the betting public. Their trust and confidence on the quality of races, coupled with the cooperation of the other sectors of the industry to the present leadership of the Commission in terms of providing clean and wholesome races boosted the sales to unprecedented higher levels.

The Commission has given its assurance to patrons of the races that as long as the present leadership runs the Commission that it will strictly enforce the horse racing rules and regulations and will continue to deliver its mandate as well as the much needed changes to make it at par with the other racing countries in Asia. It has consistently penalized its licensees for violations of the horseracing rules and regulations. It will continue to address the problem on how to safeguard the betting public from certain elements of the industry whose desire is to fix races for their own personal advantage and benefit.

WHAT CAN I SAY

Bebo Quiros

The present leadership believes that the racing public deserves no less than clean and well balanced races because they are considered the lifeblood of the racing industry. The Commission has also approved five (5) day racing week on an experimental basis for both clubs.

II. HIGH PRIZES FOR PHILRACOM SPONSORED STAKES RACES: In 1998, the Commission was able to sponsor twenty-one (21) Stakes races with a total purse of P12.50 Million. In 1999, the Philippine Racing Commission was able to sponsor 33 stakes races with a total purse of 15.350M. For year 2000 however, there were only 23 stakes races sponsored by the Commission, lower compared to previous years, but the prize money or purse was P 15.795M, much higher than the previous years. The Philracom believes that by reducing the number of its sponsored stakes races, these will be more attractive to horseowners, trainers, jockeys, etc. because it would also mean bigger prizes.

III. SHIFT FROM URINE BLOOD TESTING TO URINE TESTING: In 1996, the Commission approved the Drug Testing Program, requiring for the first time in the entire history of racing all running horses to undergo a drug test before it will be allowed to participate in any race. This move however was met with negative reactions from the different sectors of the industry. This was expected of course because it was a well-known fact that horses are given prohibited substances in order to enhance its performance during a race. Also, at that time there were wide spread talk accusations of race fixing thru the use of prohibited substances.

When Chairman Katigbak assumed the leadership of the Philippine Racing Commission, together with all the other Commissioners, the first thing they did was to be more aggressive in implementing the drug testing program. Given the vision of providing wholesome and clean races, the Philracom Board resolved to fully implement it and hopefully to produce results. There was a random must test for all horses which was not welcomed by some sectors of the industry. It turned out that the use of blood for testing merely yielded caffeine, which the Commission believed, was just tip of the iceberg.

On April 7, 2000 the Philracom amended Sections 2.0, 4 5, 103-A, 107, 110 and 113, otherwise known as the Drug Testing Program. The collection of urine for drug testing was mandated and the procedure for its implementation was incorporated in the amendments. Through the cooperation of both racing clubs, the University of the Philippines was tapped to do the examination of samples taken from horses. Dr. Flavier of the Institute of Chemistry of University of the Philippines, Los Banos was sent to Macau and Hongkong in order to undergo the necessary training and to gain the expertise needed for the job.

During the initial tests some horses tested were found positive for Methylphenedate. In the years to come, the racing industry is hopeful that the betting public will be assured of drug free races.

IV. HOLDING OF THE BIGGEST RACE OF THE MILLENIUM: The year ending 1999, witnessed the holding of the most important and prestigious event which was the Millenium Race. This race was very significant because it was a breakthrough in the history of local horseracing. The first prize for this race was P2.5M, the biggest prize ever. Second prize was P750T, third P417. The Millenium Race was a big success and this race posted 3.334 Million Pesos in sales.

V. AMENDMENT OF THE HORSERACING RULES AND REGULATIONS. The Commission is currently reviewing all the provisions of the horseracing rules and regulations in order to study its possible amendments to conform with the times and make it more responsive to the needs of the horseracing industry.

The Commission is preparing an updated Book on Horseracing Rules and Regulations which will be available in the last quarter of 2001.

VI. TITLING OF THE PHILRACOM CONDOMINIUM: Upon his appointment, Chairman Katigbak made an inventory of all the properties of the Commission. He found out that the title to the fourth floor of the Electra House Condominium had not been transferred yet to the Philracom since it was bought in 1978. It appeared that none of the past administrators worked for the transfer of the title to the Philippine Racing Commission.

All the needed documents and other pertinent papers have been duly complied with and submitted and the title is now ready for release. However, in the process of working for the transfer of the title, he discovered that the Commission is in arrears for its realty tax payments, amounting to more than one million pesos with the City of Makati.

Chairman Katigbak is now working for a tax exemption in favor of the Commission premised on the fact that the Philippine Racing Commission office condominium is government property and must be tax exempt. The Commission is hoping to get the tax exemption certificate so that the title of the fourth floor of the Electra House can be transferred to the Philippine Racing Commission.

VII. OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE COMMISSION: The present composition of the Philracom Board is regularly holding consultative meetings with the different sectors of the industry in order to discuss problems affecting them and how to further improve the horseracing industry.

Continuous dialogues with the Board of Stewards are also held considering that they play a very important role during racing days. The Commission at the same time has met with the representatives of different government agencies constituting Inter-Agency Panel on Gambling.

The Commission also sponsored the "ANGAT PINOY SUMMER RACING FESTIVAL" pursuant to the Medium Term Development Plan of the government.

For 2001, the Commission has so far registered 421 Horseowners, 152 Horse Trainers, 36 Assistant Horse Trainers, 130 Professional Jockeys, 22 Apprentice Jockeys, 89 Jockeys Helper, 547 Grooms, 28 Starting Gate Helper, 4 Racing Associations, 2 Racing Clubs, 78 Racing Officials, and 1,922 Horses.

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

BASKETBALL: NBA Eastern Conference Finals - Bucks vs Sixers, Game 1 at 8:30 a.m. (r - 9 p.m.) on ESPN

GOLF: PGA Mastercard Colonial, Third Round at 8 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

Asian PGA Tour - SK Telecom Classic, Final Day at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

TENNIS: WTA German Open Finals at 10 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

Masters Series (Hamburg) Highlights at 6 p.m. (r- tomorrow at 12:30 a.m.) on ESPN

BILLIARDS: 2001 WPBA Classic Tour, Semifinal #1 at 5 p.m. on ESPN

HOCKEY: NHL Playoffs Conference Finals Game #6 at 1 p.m. on ESPN

MOTOR SPORTS: FIM Individual Speedway World Championship Highlights at 7 p.m. (r) on ESPN

FIM World Motorcycle Championship Highlights at 9 p.m. on Star Sports

SOCCER: Spanish Football League at 12 noon (r) on Star Sports

UEFA Champions League Final tomorrow at 2 a.m. on ESPN

BASEBALL: Baseball Max at 12:30 p.m. on ESPN

SNOOKER: Premier Snooker League 2001 at 10:30 a.m. on ESPN

2001 Embassy World Championships, Quarterfinal #1 at 10:30 p.m. on ESPN.

CYCLING: Mountain Bike World Cup 2001 Highlights at 11:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

HORSESHOW JUMPING: Samsung Nations Cup 2001 Highlights at 6 p.m. on Star Sports

BADMINTON: The Asia Cup 2001 - Semifinals #2 at 10:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

SPORTS

Al S. Mendoza, Editor ■ Edwin M. Villanueva, Assistant Editor

Alamara brothers deliver

DARWIN, Australia—Brothers Norton and Ali Alamara sparkled in swimming as the Philippines jumped from 11th to seventh spot Monday after three days of hostilities in the 2001 Arafura Games here. The 22-year-old Norton and the 25-year-old Ali did their share by finishing 1-2 in the 100-meter breaststroke for boys 17-above category..

PBL CUP

PharmaQuick posts vital win; Montaña triumphs

By Dennis Eroa

STANDINGS	W	L
Group A		
Shark	9	1
Welcoat	6	3
Ana	6	3
GIV	5	4
Group B		
PharmaQuick	7	4
Hapee	5	5
Montaña	3	7
Ateneo-Pioneer	2	8
Osaka	0	9

GAMES THURSDAY
(Makati Coliseum)
3:30 p.m.—Osaka vs Montaña
5:30 p.m.—Ateneo vs Hapee

PHARMAQUICK moved a step closer to a playoff for a semifinals seat when it crushed Osaka Iridology, 70-57, last night in the PBL Chairman's Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Except from a brief period in the fourth quarter, PharmaQuick was always a step ahead of Osaka, which sank deeper to the cellar with nine straight losses.

The Pharmacists will gun for the right to meet the Group A fourth placer for the fourth and final semis seat when they battle Montaña on Tuesday.

Slippery Jessie Cabanayan spearheaded the Iridologists' rally in the fourth period, 61-57, but lack of nerves affected their comeback bid.

All that PharmaQuick needed was a Bruce Dacia undergoal and a booming triple from Jun Canoneo, 66-57, to put away Osaka.

In another Group B match, Montaña banked on charity shots to repulse hard-fighting Ateneo-Pioneer, 79-75, in overtime. Both teams are already out of the running for a semis slot.

Jacques Gottenbos, Ernest Medina and Jenkins Mesina sank seven free throws in the final one minute as the Jewels checked their usual end-game collapse. The Jewels improved to 3-7, while handing the Insurers their eighth loss in 10 outings.

First game:

MONTAÑA 79—Dimaunahan 22, Gottenbos, 18, Zamora 13, Torrente 10, Latoreno 6, Mesina 6, Lao 3, Medina 1, Misola 0.

ATENEO 75—Tan Chi 19, Ferrer 18, Villanueva 8, Alvarez 6, Gonzales 5, Antonio 4, Quimpo 4, Benitez 3, Bugia 2, Cruz 2, Yao 2, Victoria 2.

Quarters: 22-9, 37-28, 54-44, 63-63, 79-75.

Second game:

PHARMAQUICK 70—Dacia 25, Lanete 14, Avenido 8, Alfad 6, Lim 4, Rodriguez 4, Canoneo 3, Jabar 2, Jones 2, Velez 2, Lapinid 0.

OSAKA 57—Cabanayan 18, Daep 11, Cuan 6, Franco 6, Ramos 4, Uy 3, Omolon 3, Asmad , Magsumbol 2, Wilson 2, Castro 0, Neil 0.

Quarters: 17-16, 37-23, 51-41, 70-57.

Assumption scores

UNIVERSITY of Assumption-Goldilocks boosted its quarterfinal bid via a 69-55 decision over Spring Cooking Oil yesterday in the 1st Crystal Spring PYBL Title Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Selling point

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THE GREATEST selling point of the forthcoming PBA Commissioner's Cup is the presence of imports with multipronged credentials. Yet none of these much publicized players can equal, much less surpass, the academic achievements of Batang Red bull's 28-year-old import Antonio Lang.

For example, do you know that Lang graduated as the class valedictorian at LeFore High School in Mobile, Alabama? Of that, he graduated from Duke University with a double major in Economics and History?

But it was in basketball where he made his mark.

As a student, the 6-foot-8 Lang played forward for Duke in 1991 and 1992. In 1994, he spearheaded the Blue Devils to the US NCAA Finals, although Duke lost to Arkansas in the championship game. His college roommate then was Grant Hill, now an NBA star with the Orlando Magic.

During his four seasons with the Blue Devils, Lang tallied 1,012 points in 135 games, shooting over 52 percent in each of them. He averaged 12.5 points and 5.4 rebounds in his senior year in 1993-94.

After graduation, he saw action in the NBA for six years, initially playing for the Phoenix Suns who chose him as the team's second round draft pick in 1994. Lang also played for Cleveland, Miami, Toronto and Philadelphia.

Most recently, Lang donned the Fort Wayne Fury jersey in the Continental Basketball association where he averaged 17.8 points per game and 8.7 rebounds. When the cash-strapped CBA folded, he joined Connecticut in the International Basketball League where he hit 21.3 points, grabbed 8.9 rebounds and tallied 1.6 blocked shots. When the IBL ended its season, Lang played for the Dodge City Legend and the United States Basketball League.

"Lang is always on the go," said Mike Gonzales, his Los Angeles-based agent. "He wants to be in top shape when he gets to Manila."

Mainly because he will be attending an NBA development camp this July as part of his comeback plans, Lang is taking two weeks off from his Manila team. But not to worry. TV analyst and Red Bull assistant team manager Andy Jao said Ray Tutt, who sparked the Thunder to third place in last year's PBA Governors' Cup, could fill the two-week gap.

"I'm sure Lang would come back," Jao stressed. "He knows that the PBA is perfect for him to hone his skills as part of his NBA comeback bid. Besides, he won't start earning his bonuses until after the elimination series." Lang has promised to return.

Being a natural leader, Lang could also be counted to provide the mature judgment to an error-prone and inexperienced team, something which Batang Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao badly needs at present.

* * *

SPORTS TRIVIA. Nic Jorge, then 36, was the youngest Filipino coach in the history of the World Basketball Championship when he was appointed mentor of the national team to the world cage meet hosted by Manila in 1978. A former star player of the University of the Philippines, Jorge began his coaching career at the age of 24, barely a year after he graduated from college. He attended basketball camps and seminars conducted by the International Olympic Committee, including clinics organized by the fabled Jerry West of the Los Angeles Lakers Keith Swagerty of Seattle, Washington.

* * *

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Martin games today

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11:00 a.m. – UP vs St. Jude (Srs.)
12:30 p.m. – Ateneo vs SBC A (Jrs.)
2:00 p.m. Ateneo vs Angelicum (Srs.)
3:30 p.m. FEU vs SSC (Srs.)
5:00 p.m. – Jose Rizal vs SBC A (Srs.)
UE gym
8:00 a.m. – PCU vs SBC B (Jrs.)
9:30 a.m. – UPHR vs Adamson (Jrs.)
11:00 a.m. – DLSZ vs Aquinas (Jrs.)
12:30 p.m. – SSC vs Ateneo B (Jrs.)
2:00 p.m. – Adamson vs TIP (Srs.)
3:30 p.m. UNO vs Letran (Jrs.)
5:00 p.m. – PCU Taft vs UST B (Srs.)

FOURTEEN games featuring some of the front-running senior teams will be on tap in two venues today in the 7th Fr. Martin Cup invitational basketball tournament.

Far Eastern University's unbeaten Tamaraws gun for their seventh straight victory and a semifinal slot in group A when they face the San Sebastian Stags at 3:30 p.m. at FEU gym.

Two other teams which are bidding for semifinal seats in the cagefest sponsored by Agfa, Photo Plus, Red Bull and Smart-Piltel—Jose Rizal and San Beda A—clash at the 5 p.m. also at FEU.

The Bombers and the Lions are tied for second in group B at 5-1, a half-game away from idle leader University of the East (6-1).

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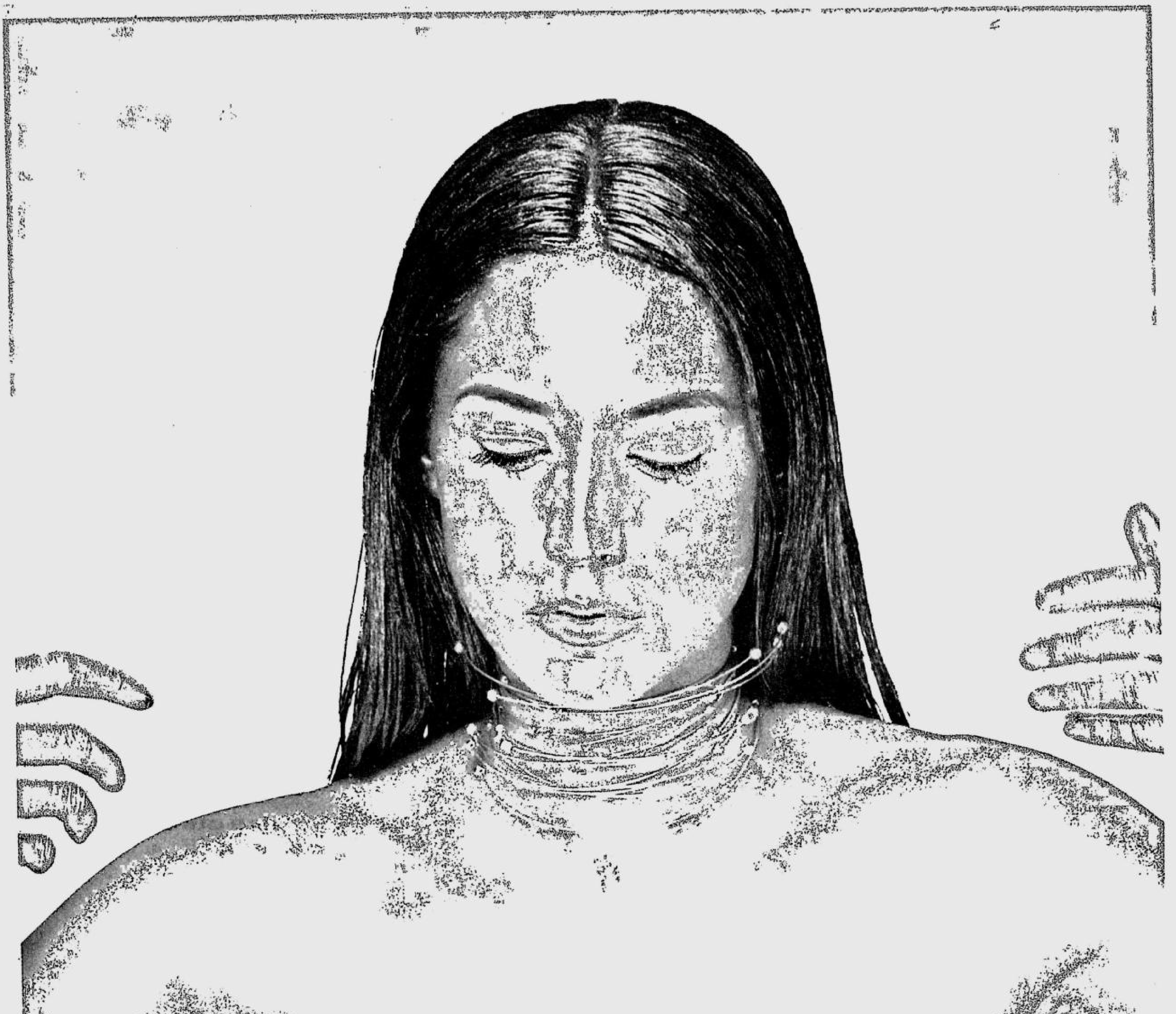

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De La Salle student kills self after scolding by pa

A YOUNG man on Sunday shot himself to death with his father's gun in their house in Las Piñas City allegedly after his father scolded him, police said.

DE LA SALLE/ A26

Angry wife leads cops to 'Joseph Estrada'

By Agnes E. Donato

LIKE his famous namesake, market vendor Joseph Estrada of Taytay, Rizal is now in jail.

His wife Cristina, who learned Estrada was having an affair with another woman, yesterday led police to his hiding place after a warrant was issued for his arrest for violation of the Batasang Pambansa 22, or the bouncing check law.

Estrada, of the San Lorenzo Ruiz Resettlement Area in Taytay, Rizal, was out on bail for the same offense when he was arrested.

His case was being tried before the Pasig City Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 72.

But after a few hearings, Estrada failed to show up in court, prompting the judge to issue another arrest warrant.

Estrada went into hiding in the Bicol region where he allegedly started an affair with another woman, according to Pasig City police chief Supt. John Sosito. Estrada's wife Cristina learned of the affair.

When Estrada arrived in Pasig City two days ago, Cristina led police to his hiding place.

Police said Estrada did not resist arrest when authorities came for him at about 10 a.m. yesterday.

He is now behind bars at the Pasig police station.

Police are waiting for Cristina to file a complaint against Estrada for his alleged womanizing.

NBI to probe Berroya liability in two slays

By Michael Lim Ubac

DIRECTOR Reynaldo Wycoco of the National Bureau of Investigation has ordered an investigation of the culpability of Senior Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, chief of the Philippine National Police Intelligence Group, and his men for the killing of the chief steward of the New World Hotel and a young woman on May 17.

Wycoco yesterday ordered lawyer Oscar Embido, chief of the NBI intelligence special operations division, to determine if Berroya and his men could be held administratively and criminally liable for the murder of Fernando Lozada, 48, and Marian Uson, 18.

Lozada was shot several times in the head and body. Uson, a family friend, was hit in the head and died three days after the ambush.

Lozada's daughter, Clarissa, 17, only suffered minor injuries from glass splinters.

Wycoco decided to step into the case on the behest of Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and after the PNP hierarchy asked the NBI to conduct an independent investigation to erase doubts of a whitewash.

Wycoco said he was also thinking of providing security for Lozada's family since the family members were allegedly receiving death threats.

The attack on Lozada and his companions occurred at about 8:30

NBI/ A26

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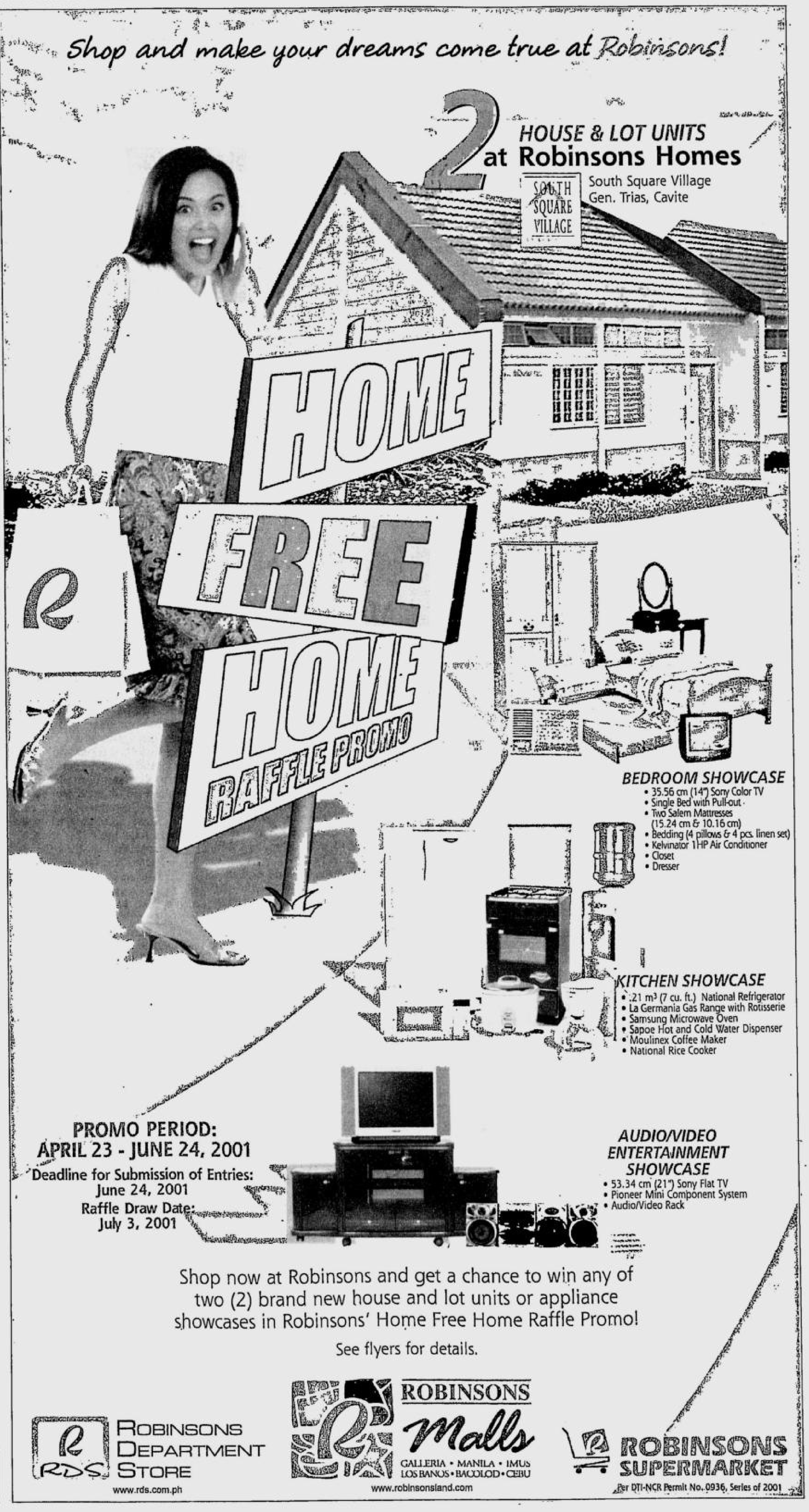
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Atienza calls his 2 rivals 'sore losers'

By Jerome Aning

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza yesterday said he is up against "sore losers" who are trying to stop the ongoing canvassing of election results in the city and suspend the proclamation of winning candidates.

Atienza deplored the contention of the lawyers of his rival candidates, former Interior secretary Alfredo Lim and former Rep. Amado Bagatsing, that the canvassing is illegal because the city board of canvassers did not form a "reception and custody group" to receive election returns for safekeeping.

"They are trying to create an issue where there is none," said Atienza's spokesperson, city legal officer Melchor Monsod.

"This is a clear and obvious attempt to disrupt the proceedings and prevent the proclamation of the rightful winners," Monsod added.

The canvassing of returns at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium in Malate entered its seventh day yesterday, with the board of canvassers rushing to finish tabulation for the first and fifth districts.

The board would not release any partial results, but in many parts of Manila, even in front of the stadium, banners congratulating Atienza for his apparent victory, as well as of Atienza thanking voters for their support, are already in place.

Monsod pointed out that when members of the city treasurer's office took to the stadium the 20 ballot boxes which allegedly contained missing election returns, they were accompanied by watchers and law enforcers duly deputized by the Commission on Elections.

The arrival of the 20 ballot boxes from the office of the city treasurer on Monday triggered an uproar when the anti-Atienza factions demanded that the 20 ballot boxes be excluded from the canvassing.

The lawyers and pollwatchers of Lim and Bagatsing also threatened to walk out of what they called "illegal proceedings" in the canvassing.

The boxes reportedly contained the original copies of returns from 23 precincts which teachers mistakenly placed inside after tallying on May 15.

But board of canvassers chair Emilio Santos dismissed the protests and included the controversial returns in the canvassing.

Also, election officer IV Ma. Lea Alarkon, Manila's senior Comelec registrar, said the ballot boxes were obtained with the proper documents.

Alarkon said the returns involved as much as 5,000 votes, provided that each return contained the maximum 250 voters per precinct.

She explained that on May 15, when election inspectors reported to the Ninoy Aquino stadium, some teachers placed inside the boxes all the election returns including the first copies which should have been separated and turned over to the board of canvassers.

By law, the ballot boxes should be placed in the custody of the city treasurer at the end of tallying in the precinct level.

"The question now is whether the treasurer's office secured the ballot boxes (while they were in its custody)," Alarkon said.

But she said she believes that the contents of the ballot boxes were free from tampering since they were paper-sealed and all the keys were properly turned over to the board of canvassers.

Alarkon explained that contrary to the claim of the lawyers of Lim and Bagatsing, the CBC designated 12 election assistants who acted as the "reception and custody group."

Lim and Bagatsing said the returns, which the city treasurer received should be inventoried. They said they have uncovered the possible substitution of genuine returns with spurious ones, as well as alterations made on genuine returns.

Most of the canvass returns did not contain thumbmarks of watchers and had broken paper seals, the two candidates said. There were also cases when serial numbers of returns for local candidates were completely different from serial numbers of returns for the national candidates.

There were also many precincts where the total number of votes received by all candidates for mayor "far exceeded" the number of voters who actually voted, they said.

"Despite the objections of petitioners' counsel(s), the board made uniform oral rulings that those were merely formal defects," Lim and Bagatsing said in their petition.

Their lawyers said that if the canvassing would continue, they would bring the issue before the Comelec main office.

Don't agitate Caloocan folk, Bacani warns bets

By Christian V. Esguerra

BISHOP Teodoro Bacani yesterday called on the Commission on Elections to postpone the proclamation of winners in the May 14 elections in Caloocan until the poll body has completed its investigation of the "election fiasco" in the city.

Bacani also asked Caloocan Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo, and brothers Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio and Macario "Boy" Asistio Jr. to avoid "agitating" residents by claiming separate victories while votes are still being canvassed.

"What's important at this point is that the people should not be agitated," said the Catholic bishop for northern Manila.

Bacani pointed out that when a party claims victory prematurely and the results turn out to show a different outcome, "there is a possibility of inciting (the people) to restlessness."

He advised Malonzo and the Asistios to wait "patiently" for the results of the official count and of the investigation of what he called the "massive disenfranchisement" of voters in the city.

In a letter to Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo, Bacani said about 50 to 60 percent of voters, mostly from Northern Caloocan, were not able to vote on May 14 because of the delay in the distribution of election materials.

He also asked the Comelec to first determine "whether a failure of elections should be declared and another election (should be) held."

Most of the affected voters, he said, were from Dela Costa Homes, Amparo, Midway and Victory Villages, Camarin, Malaria, Barracks, and Bagong Silang.

Chaos marked elections in Caloocan where ballot boxes, official ballots, election returns, and other paraphernalia were distributed in disorder.

The election materials were under the care of city treasurer Lourdes Jose.

The incident delayed and even postponed elections in many polling precincts.

The extension of election that the Comelec set for the following day was also delayed.

"I am expressing the sentiment of a very large segment of the community in Caloocan," Bacani said in his letter. "People are apprehensive that there will not be peace in the city unless ... the true will of the people is determined with certainty."

Even before the Comelec could complete the canvassing of votes, Malonzo had already proclaimed himself winner of the mayoral race over "Baby" Asistio.

Malonzo claimed that based on his personal quick count, he defeated Asistio in a landslide. He then called a news conference to announce his alleged victory.

Two posters bearing his picture and the statement "Congratulations Mayor Malonzo" were put up in front of City Hall.

Malonzo also thanked those who voted for him for "supporting him again" in a streamer at the Monumento Circle.

But in Baby Asistio's own count, he and his older Boy defeated their rivals.

Boy Asistio, former Caloocan mayor, is up against Councilor Edgar Erice in the city's second congressional district.

Sleepless with Milo and GTK

Bare Eye

Recah Trinidad

IF only the concerned authorities would bother to promptly answer questions on troubles in their turf, we would have a less monumental mess.

OK, there's no denying the fraud and hideous miscues, courtesy of the Comelec, that attended the May 14 elections. As usual, there's the frantic finger-pointing and the buck-passing.

In our place in Mandaluyong, there was rampant vote-buying.

My friend Goring Candelaria had to turn down the P300 a school teacher offered for him to "assist" the rival of the incumbent city mayor. At least two members of the newly formed Alige, a civic organization, refused a huge P30,000 down payment for them to produce a bunch of people who could vote for the candidate who turned out to be a loser.

Anyway, once the trend showed that the violators were fast losing the race, they were the first to cry fraud and they even demanded a failure of the electoral process.

***

All in the game. This is democracy, Pinoy-style.

We live with all the madness we have meekly and courteously allowed to sprout and thrive around us.

However, there's this form of foulness that could cost you some quiet sleep. Like the case of poor athletes from the province being left to pass the night on the pavement during the last National Track and Field championship at Rizal Memorial.

I read about the horrifying incident in Tito Talao's column Last Shot in the Manila Bulletin on Monday. It was criminal, how top officials in charge of the national event had dumped these athletes like garbage on the sidewalk.

Actually, I had expected either a reaction or explanation from Go Teng Kok, the outspoken head of the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association.

However, as of press time, there was not a single word from Mr. Go who, based on the performance of his athletes, must still be giddy with joy.

***

For a view of the horror that should merit an inquiry from concerned authorities, here's the main part of Mr. Talao's account.

"On my way to meet with sportswriters at the media center, I passed by the historic Rizal Memorial Coliseum and was stunned by what I saw: people lying on the stairs. Initially, I thought they were homeless mendicants taking refuge for the night. But the guard assigned at the gate assured me they were provincial athletes. When I asked what they were doing sleeping on the floor, without proper ventilation or mosquito nets, the guard replied 'That's their assigned quarters, sir.'"

You see, any other passerby would not have bothered to investigate the horrifying site. Thank God, it was Tito Talao, with his first-hand knowledge of how to be left out in the cold hungry and helpless, who had chanced upon those pitiful forms on the pavement.

It turned out they were not homeless vagrants but actually athletes who have been hauled over to complete the cast in the otherwise successful national trackfest.

Yes, all Tito Talao had wanted was a little explanation. The veteran sports scribe has been deeply bothered.

It was indeed hard to reconcile how competitors in the major event sponsored by Milo got dumped like empty cans of the popular health drink.

***

The horror now becomes unthinkable if you consider the fabled generosity of Go Teng Kok, who's been known to throw away thousands and thousands for the feasts of some very accommodating backers in the deadline beating business.

Actually, the venue of that "human dumpsite" is only about six steps to the hollowed wall enshrining the names of late Filipino Olympic medallists like Miguel White and Teofilo Yldefonso, who had also served as soldiers and gave their lives for the country during the last war.

The suggestion was that Go Teng Kok and his men could have chosen another dumpsite to make the incident less revulsive and insulting.

Of course, there's also the suspicion that sleeping on the pavement could be part of the training newly prescribed for future gold winners.

Or does drinking magical Milo make a poor athlete immune to the fates?

Last heard, Tito Talao was still shaking in disgust. He could hardly sleep.

One sane explanation would help, please.

Daboy tells backers to support Belmonte

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE RACE for the Quezon City mayoralty ended yesterday after actor Rudy Fernandez ordered his poll watchers to withdraw from the canvassing of votes at the Quezon City hall.

Fernandez also urged his followers to support the leading mayoral candidate, Sonny Belmonte, and promised to try, as a private citizen, to fulfill his dreams for Quezon City.

"I take full responsibility (for my defeat) in the face of the huge machinery of my opponent," Fernandez said in Filipino. "I was not able to protect the voice of the people.

"Now I ask all my friends and followers to support the new (city) administration because we would go nowhere if we don't act as one.

"I would like to thank all of those who helped and supported me. I will consider my lifelong debt the love and confidence that you showed me."

The movie actor said he learned that the voting in elections is different from the counting of votes.

"What did I learn?" he asked in Filipino. "That the voting is different from the counting."

He said his hopes that the elections would be peaceful and clean were crushed.

He also offered his services to the new Belmonte administration, "if this is what he wants."

"I want him (to have) the best, and I hope and pray that he fulfills his promises to the people," Fernandez said.

"But this does not mean that my crusade is over. I will not abandon Quezon City and, as a private citizen, I will try to fulfill my campaign promises."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, May 23, 2001
6th Week of Easter

1st Reading: **Acts 17:15, 22—18:1**
Gospel: **Jn 16:12-15**

Jesus said to his disciples, "I still have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now. When he, the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into the whole truth.

He has nothing to say of himself but he will speak of what he hears, and he will tell you of the things to come. He will take what is mine and make it known to you; in doing this, he will glorify me. All that the Father has is mine; because of this I have just told you, that the Spirit will take what is mine and make it known to you."

Commentary:

We all, irrespective of any state in life and even of the form of religiosity we confess, are called to the whole truth. This must be realized especially in the context of the pluralist religiosity of the Asian continent. Neither culture nor any religious tradition or expression may absolutely arrogate to itself the prerogative of having the whole truth. This is the reason why before other religionists we need to be respectful. For the truth that is in them comes from the same Spirit of truth, who is present to us and to all. When any religious tradition (including the Catholic one that we profess) becomes appropriative of the truth, herein ensues conflict. Religion and its expressions, being highly culturally conditioned, could become thus easy prey to manipulative fanaticism with vested political and economic interests. Truth, like good and the other transcedentals, however, are all of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. In the same manner, they must also be of us limited creatures, who cannot but be interdependent with one another.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Defense not pleaded in motion to dismiss deemed waived—Rule 9, Section 1 of the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure states that defenses and objections not pleaded either in a motion to dismiss or in the answer are deemed waived. The court may only dismiss an action *motu proprio* in case of lack of jurisdiction over the subject matter, *litis pendentia, res judicata* and prescription. Therefore, the trial court in this case erred when it dismissed the petition *motu proprio*. It should have waited for a motion to dismiss or a responsive pleading from respondent, raising the objection or affirmative defense of improper venue, before dismissing the petition. However, this was overtaken by petitioner's motion for leave to amend its petition. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, Rudolf Lietz Holdings Inc. v. Registry of Deeds of Parañaque City, G.R. No. 133240, November 15, 2000]

Digest by R.B. Vera

Manager slain by subordinate

JIMMY Ordanza, personnel manager of sardine factory Youngstown Canning Corp., on Monday was stabbed dead in Navotas by one of his subordinates whom he had allegedly maltreated, police said.

Ordanza, 44, personnel manager of Youngstown Canning Corp., was attacked allegedly by Reynaldo Nocus, a resident of North Bay Boulevard, Navotas, at about 6:30 p.m. Monday, said SPO1 Daniel Ferrer.

Ordanza and Glicerio Bescanes were riding a pedicab when Nocus and three companions blocked the vehicle's path on C-3 Road and Nocus repeatedly stabbed Ordanza, said Ferrer. Nocus and his companions fled.

Ordanza was wounded in the left temple, chest and back.

Paul Ernest Lazaro

P.5M jai alai bets stolen

THREE officials of a firm that manages off-site jai alai betting stations lost almost P500,000 in bets to two armed men who held them up in Ermita, Manila yesterday at noon.

SB Entertainment and Amusement Corp. business development manager Rafael Natividad, 43, finance head Rafael Paguia and operations assistant Roberto Benata were on their way to the Bank of Commerce on Padre Faura Street in Ermita when the robbery happened.

Investigators said the officials' Nissan Sentra had just stopped at a red light at the corner of Pedro Gil and A. Mabini streets when armed men opened the back doors and entered the car at about 12:30 p.m.

They were carrying P411,000 in cash which they meant to change into P1,000 bills at the bank, said investigator SPO2 Mario Torrente.

The SB officers had come from their office at the corner of M. H. del Pilar and Cuarteles streets and intended to exchange the money at the Equitable-PCI Bank on Pedro Gil but the bank said it did not have enough bills.

Benata, who was in the back seat of the Sentra, said one of the armed men poked a gun at his left armpit and ordered Natividad, who was driving, to proceed to Robinsons Place, a mall on Pedro Gil.

When the car turned on San Andres Street, the armed men alighted, having taken the money and the cell phones of Benata and Paguia, said SPO1 Torrente.

The gunmen were last seen going into the San Andres market, he said.

Benata said the man who poked a gun at him was about 30, burly, dark, long-haired, about 5-foot-11 and wearing a white shirt.

Myla Torres and JP Andaquig

NBI to ...

(From page A25)

p.m. last Thursday on Araneta Avenue in Quezon City while members of Berroya's PNP-IG and the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group were pursuing the suspected kidnappers of Mark Harry Bacalla, according to the CIDG.

The lawmen earlier arrested suspected kidnapper Zaldy Cariño, a taxi driver, allegedly after receiving the second part of the ransom money from Bacalla's mother Ofelia.

Bacalla, 23, son of a former judge of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court, was abducted after attending a classmate's party in Fairview, Quezon City on May 2.

Police said the kidnappers brought Bacalla to Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija, where they killed him.

It was Cariño who tipped off police that his companions were on board a blue Mitsubishi Lancer. This prompted Berroya's men and the CIDG agents to trail two vehicles that resembled the description given by Cariño.

After one of the suspected vehicles managed to speed away, backup policemen chased the other car. However, they mistook Lozada's car, a Mitsubishi Lancer (TKM-265), for the escape vehicle of the kidnappers.

Lozada, his daughter Clarissa and Uson were on their way to attend a birthday party.

Berroya's men fired upon Lozada's car, instantly killing Lozada and wounding Uson, who died from a head bullet wound while undergoing treatment at the Capitol Medical Center in Quezon City.

A source said Uson was already clinically dead when she was brought to the hospital.

On Monday, Berroya said he is ready to "punish" his men.

Earlier, a source said Lozada drove through a police blockade and "nearly ran over an agent." Lozada's car rammed into a sidewalk, but the policemen continued firing at the vehicle, according to case investigator PO3 Diosdado Pedroanan.

Central Police District (CPD) director Senior Supt. Rodolfo Tor declined to name the 10 policemen, who are now facing double murder and frustrated murder charges.

"We are still waiting for the results of the paraffin tests," Tor said in a phone interview on Monday. "We don't want to accuse anyone without having enough evidence."

He said the policemen had surrendered 10 guns, which were put through ballistic tests at the PNP Crime Laboratory in Camp Crame.

Banker's son from Ateneo missing

SAN FERNANDO CITY—An Ateneo de Manila University student has been missing since April 25, according to his parents.

Ives Jesus Nisce, 18, who is supposed to be a BS Management student at the start of the coming school year, was last seen walking along Katipunan Avenue, close to Ateneo, in Loyola Heights, Quezon City, said his father Ives Sr.

The father is himself an Ateneo graduate and is the president of the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines.

The disappearance was reported to the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force in Camp Crame almost a month ago but the Nisce family still has no idea where the boy is and if he is still alive, the father said.

No money has been withdrawn from the boy's ATM account since the day he went missing, he said.

The family searched even in Metro Manila's morgues, but with negative results, he said.

The family has also not received any ransom note.

Ives, the nephew of La Union Vice Gov. Aureo Nisce, was last seen wearing a white round-neck shirt, denim pants and sneakers.

People with information on his whereabouts can call his parents at 0917-742-0519. *Gia Damaso-Dumo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

De La Salle student kills ...

(From page A25)

Police said Jake Puentespina, 25, was a graduating civil engineering student of the DLSU on Taft Avenue in Manila.

Puentespina suffered a gunshot wound between his neck and jawline and was dead on arrival at the Perpetual Help Medical Center, said SPO1 George Gabriel of the Las Piñas City Police Criminal Investigation Division.

Gabriel said the shooting happened in the master bedroom of the Puentespina house at 5 Gemma Cruz St. in BF Resort, Las Piñas at 2:10 a.m. last Sunday.

Police said the student's parents arrived from a vacation in Davao last Friday, and a small family gathering was held the following day with some friends and relatives. Police said the young Puentespina acted normal at that time and did not seem depressed.

Later, his parents allegedly scolded Puentespina, police said. The reason for the scolding, however, was not immediately known.

Several hours after the scolding, his 12-year-old brother found Puentespina face down in a pool of blood in the master bedroom, police said.

Police said they learned that Puentespina shot himself with his father's 9mm pistol, which was kept in the master bedroom.

Police said the parents refused to talk to them and immediately flew to Davao to bury their son.

Alcuin Papa and Allison Lopez

$5-M party launches $140-M 'Pearl Harbor'

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii—Disney transformed a Navy aircraft carrier into a mammoth moviehouse for the launch of its summer blockbuster, "Pearl Harbor."

Hollywood stars, military brass and World War II veterans were among the 2,000 guests at last Monday night's premier on the flight deck of the USS John C. Stennis at Pearl Harbor. The movie opens in theaters on Friday.

The $5-million premier party matched the extravagance of the $140-million film starring Ben Affleck, Kate Beckinsale and Josh Hartnett, with what producer Jerry Bruckheimer said was "one of the biggest fireworks displays ever."

The Stennis was moored a few hundred yards from ground zero of the Dec. 7, 1941, Japanese attack that drew the United States into World War II. The ship is opposite the memorial for some 900 crew of the USS Arizona who went down with the battleship in the first 30 minutes of the surprise attack.

Also nearby was the USS Missouri battleship, on whose deck Japan signed surrender documents in 1945.

The Stennis' 1.8-hectare flight deck was transformed into an open-air theater with stadium seating.

A vintage B-25 bomber and a P-40 fighter are displayed on the deck of the 97,000-ton carrier, amid rolls of red carpet and white party tents.

The movie directed by Michael Bay tells the story of the attack through the lives of two fighter pilots from Tennessee (Affleck and Hartnett) who fall in love with the same nurse (Beckinsale).

"It's a love story that gets entangled into a war story," said Bay, whose earlier collaborations with Bruckheimer include "Armageddon" and "The Rock."

Bay acknowledged he threatened to quit the project four times because of battles over the movie's budget and casting. But he said he's proud of the finished product, especially a lengthy attack sequence partially filmed in Hawaii and based on firsthand accounts from Pearl Harbor survivors.

"It was very hard to get it down and do this movie right," Bay said. "You can't scrimp on a title called 'Pearl Harbor.'"

Actress James King, who plays a nurse in the movie, said the premier paid tribute to the 2,436 Americans killed in the attack.

"It's time to have a celebration in their memory," she said. "I think it's time to look back at this time and celebrate the time our country pulled together." *AP*

Iranian porn star stoned to death

TEHRAN—An Iranian woman convicted of acting in pornographic films has been stoned to death in the prison where she has been held for the last eight years, a newspaper reported Monday.

The unnamed 35-year-old was buried in a pit and pelted with stones until she died in the center of Tehran's Evin prison, the Entekhab paper said, adding that she had been tracked down after an intensive police search.

It said investigators only succeeded in finding her after they noticed the serial number of an electricity meter that was in the background of a scene in one of her films.

She denied being the woman on screen but police found several witnesses who testified she was indeed the X-rated actress.

The woman was sentenced to death after being convicted of adultery and "corruption on earth," a verdict which was upheld by the supreme court, the paper said.

Under Iran's Islamic law, adultery and corruption on earth are punishable by death.

Men sentenced to stoning are buried up to their necks, and women up to their armpits, but according to Islamic tradition they are acquitted if they succeed in pulling themselves free during the stoning.

The paper did not say when the woman was executed. *AFP*

MTV honors best music videos

MTV Philippines premieres "MTV Pilipinas 2001," the event that honors the best in music video-making in the country.

With 18 nominees in seven categories (best new artist, best group, best male, best female, best song, best director and best video), the awards night on June 8 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel is expected to be the biggest event for music video-making.

New artist Kyla leads the group of nominees, with five citations, including one for best new artist and best video.

Longtime favorite Parokya ni Edgar follows with four nominations and new group Slapshock, Gary Valenciano and singer-actress Jessa Zaragoza follow with three nominations each.

Other nominees are Chico Science, Teeth, Eraserheads, Ogie Alcasid, Battery, Radioactive Sago Project, Kaya, Side A, Francis M, Mo Twister, Viktoria, Regine Velasquez and Lani Misalucha.

Deadline for submission of votes is on May 25 (Friday).

Music lovers may participate in the voting process by choosing their most favorite artist in each other seven categories.

Best new artist—Kyla for "Hanggang Ngayon," Slapshock for "Agent Orange," Chico Science for "Sink or Swim," Radioactive Sago Project for "Gusto Ko ng Baboy" and Kaya for Oblivious."

Best group—Teeth for "Shooting Star," Side A for "Will I Ever," Eraserheads for "Maskara," Slapshock for "Agent Orange" and Parokya ni Edgar for "Inuman Na."

Best male—Francis M for "Luv 4 Lyf," Ogie Alcasid for "Kahit Na," Mo Twister for "World Go Round," Gary V for "I Will Be Here" and "Anak."

Best female—Viktoria for "To Be Near You," Jessa Zaragoza for "Siya Ba ang Dahilan," Kyla for "Hanggang Ngayon," Regine Velasquez for "Lost Without Your Love" and Lani Misalucha for "One More Time."

Best song—Kyla for "Hanggang Ngayon," Slapshock for "Agent Orange," Ogie Alcasid for "Kahit Na," Eraserheads for "Maskara" and Parokya ni Edgar for "Inuman Na."

Best director—Lyle Sacris for Kyla's "Hanggang Ngayon," Mario Sarmiento for Battery's "Come To Me," Lyle Sacris for Chico Science's "Sink or Swim," Louie Ignacio for Jessa Zaragoza's "Siya Ba ang Dahilan" and Robert Quebral for Parokya ni Edgar's "Inuman Na."

Best video—Kyla's "Hanggang Ngayon," Teeth's "Shooting Star," Battery's "Come To Me," Parokya ni Edgar's "Inuman Na," Gary V's "I Will Be Here" and Jessa Zaragoza's "Siya Ba ang Dahilan."

Participants may vote through ballots available at Music One, Tower Records, Radio City, Odyssey Records, TGI Friday's, Outback Restaurant, Italianni's Restaurant, MTV Style outlets and Sari-Sari Stores. Voters may win VIP tickets to the event.

Votes may also be sent by fax (633-5649), with name, age, address and phone numbers or log on to www.mtvasia.com.

Smart Zed subscribers can also text in their votes by keying in "vote MTV" in their mobile phones and sending their text to 288.

MTV is on Channel 41 for free TV subscribers, Channel 32 for SkyCable subscribers and Channel 41 for Home Cable subscribers.

For more information, call your cable operator or the MTV hotline at 882-1MTV.

City Lite presents jazz show

AFTER her critically acclaimed one-month stint in the Singaporean production of "Rent," singer Anna Fegi sizzles anew in City Lite 88.3's "City Jazz n' Grooves," 10 tomorrow night, May 24 at Monk's Dream, Jupiter st. in Makati.

The concert packs 90 minutes of pure and smooth jazz music, as rendered by the city's top music stylists.

Fegi was part of the last batch of Smokey Mountain and is now a regular performer on ABS-CBN's Sunday noontime show, "Asap."

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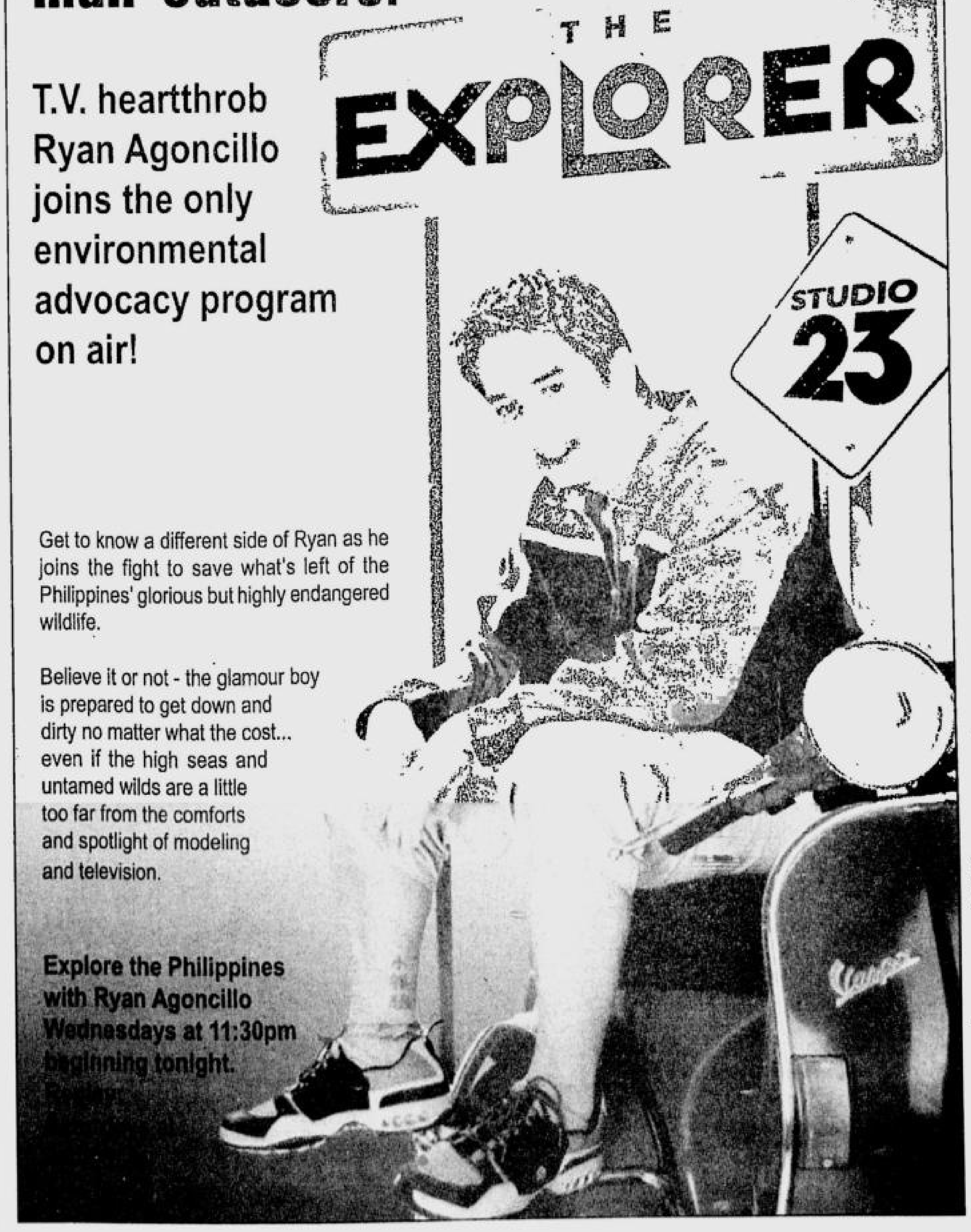

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2 RESERVE
3 RESERVE
4 THE POSSESSED
5 KAMASUTRA 2001
6 SPY KIDS
7 (DTS) THE MUMMY RETURN
8 (SDDS) VALENTINE
9 (DOLBY) TRAFFIC

Caloocan
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2 THE MUMMY RETURN

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2 BALIKTARAN
3 THE POSSESSED
4 (SDDS) THE MUMMY RETURN
5 SPY KIDS
6 (DOLBY) TRAFFIC
7 (DTS) THE MUMMY RETURN
8 NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
9 RESERVE

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083
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2 KAMASUTRA 2001
3 RESERVE
4 SPY KIDS
5 (SDDS) THE MUMMY RETURN
6 VALENTINE
7 (DOLBY) TRAFFIC
8 PILAK

Ortigas
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2 TRAFFIC
3 (DTS) THE MUMMY RETURN
4 SPY KIDS
5 (SDDS) PILAK

Universal
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(Cubao) tel 911.7888
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2 THE MUMMY RETURN
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Prima
(Pasig) tel 641 1215
1
2 THE MUMMY RETURN

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA tel 733.4238
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2 TRAFFIC
3 PILAK
4 ORAS NA PARA LUMABAN
5 SPY KIDS

New Divisoria Mall CINEMA
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2 TRAFFIC
3 PILAK
4 ORAS NA PARA LUMABAN
5 SPY KIDS
6 KUNG LILIGAYA KA

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2 PILAK
3 BALIKTARAN
4
5

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3 (DTS) 15 MINUTES

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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1 15 MINUTES
2 (DTS) THE MUMMY RETURN
3 (DOLBY) THE MUMMY RETURN
4 THE POSSESSED

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(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) TRAFFIC
2 SPY KIDS
3 PILAK
4 (DTS) THE MUMMY RETURN

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545 7202
1 (DOLBY) THE MUMMY RETURN
2 PILAK
3 (DTS) 15 MINUTES
4 THE POSSESSED
5 SECRET OF ANDES

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2 15 MINUTES
3 THE POSSESSED

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101
1 THE MUMMY RETURN
2 15 MINUTES
3 THE POSSESSED

Olivarez Tagaytay
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1 BALIKTARAN
2 EXIT WOUNDS
3 KUNG LILIGAYA KA

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2 THE POSSESSED
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2 15 MINUTES
3 SOMEONE LIKE YOU
4 15 MINUTES

Berma
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1 THE MUMMY RETURN
2

CitiMall
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2 PILAK
3 RESERVE
4 THE MUMMY RETURN

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Elvis Costello guests on Studio 23 program

ELVIS Costello, the most atypical of Britain's angry young punks of the late '70s and early '80s, talks about his long, varied career and longevity in the entertainment business, in a 30-minute interview on Myx's "Speak Easy," May 24, Thursday, 5:30 p.m.

Born Declan Patrick MacManus in England, Costello has a practiced irony even in his choice of a stage name, taking his moniker from the king of rock n' roll, Elvis Presley.

Determined to be discovered, he strapped an amplified guitar on his back and trooped to the Hilton Hotel in London to get the attention of CBS Records executives who were holding a convention inside the hotel. The rest is history.

Annual hairstyling and makeup competition

THE FILIPINO Hairdressers Cooperative (Filhair Coop.), headed by well-known beauty expert and civic leader Ricky Reyes, holds another "Hair and Make-up Trends," 7:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. today at the Philippine International Convention Center Reception Hall.

The event is presented by Kolours by Splash. Caring Colours is major sponsor and M. Power Enterprises Inc. and HBC Personal Store are co-sponsors.

Now on its 17th year, the annual event will showcase the creativity and artistry that go into hairstyling. It attracts not only hairdressers from different parts of the globe who conduct seminars and hair shows, but also draws thousands of participants from all over the country who compete for trophies and cash prizes, plus the honor to represent the Philippines in hairdressing contests abroad.

"Hair and Make-Up Trends 2001" is open to all Filhair Coop members and aspiring hairstylists. Registration for the competition starts at 7 a.m. There will be more than 100 hair and beauty experts from abroad to act as judges.

Seminars and hair shows will also be staged by the participants from Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, China, Australia, Thailand, Malaysia, Kuwait, Switzerland, Sri-Lanka, Singapore and Indonesia.

Guest of honor for the opening is First Gentleman Mike Arroyo.

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BALIKTARAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	VALENTINE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	SPY KIDS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	15 MINUTES
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	THE POSSESSED
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	EXIT WOUNDS
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	SPY KIDS
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	15 MINUTES
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	MALIKOT ANG AGOS NG TUBIG / TALK DIRTY
ODEON	MUMMY RETURNS
ODEON-2	KAMASUTRA 2001
ROBEN	DIVINO, ANAK NI TOTOY MOLA
TANDEM-1	KUNG LILIGAYA KA
TANDEM-2	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
TIMES	MS. CONGENIALITY / DEMON GATE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	TRAFFIC
QUEZON-1	MUMMY RETURNS
REMAR	MUMMY RETURNS
REMAR-2	KUNG LILIGAYA KA
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED
CINEMA-2	VALENTINE MAY 23-24 NETHERLANDS FILM FESTIVAL MAY 25-[illegible]
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	TRAFFIC
CINEMA-2	BALIKTARAN
CINEMA-3	15 MINUTES
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	EXIT WOUNDS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-6	THE POSSESSED
CINEMA-7	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
CINEMA-8	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	TRAFFIC
CINEMA-12	SPY KIDS
CINEMA-14	VALENTINE
CINEMA-15	KAMASUTRA 2001
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	15 MINUTES
CINEMA-2	TRAFFIC
CINEMA-3	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-4	SPY KIDS
CINEMA-5	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
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Di Caprio to star in Scorsese's 'Gangs of New York'

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WHAT'S **Leonardo Di Caprio** up to these days? No longer quite the king of the show biz world, Leo still gets the best deals in Tinseltown from producers who are hoping that he has an other "Titanic"-like mega-hit left in him.

One of the movies he's agreed to do is "Gangs of New York," mainly because it's directed by **Martin Scorsese.** It also helps that Leo's leading lady in the film is the currently hot **Cameron Diaz.**

What's up next for DiCaprio? He could agree to star in the remake of "The Picture of Dorian Gray," Oscar Wilde's classic tale about an exceedingly goodlooking young fop with a dark secret locked in his attic.

New program schedule

THE ABS-CBN News Channel's two new programs, "Tell the People Now" and "Point Blank," have caused some changes in the regular ANC schedule: All shows on the 9 to 10 p.m. time slot will be aired a day earlier.

"Talk Back with Tina" is now telecast every Monday. Tuesdays, it's "Strictly Politics" with **Pia Hontiveros.** "Private Conversations with Boy Abunda" is now seen every Wednesday.

Thursdays, keep an eye out for "By Demand" with **Katrina Legarda.** And **Jullie Yap-Daza**'s new show, "Tell the People Now" is aired every Friday.

As for "Point Blank," it's telecast every weeknight at 11 p.m. **Ces Drilon** hosts the show.

TV treats

FRIDAY, May 25 at 8 p.m. on Viva Cinema, "Freestyle: Live" presents the band's first major concert, held at the Araneta Coliseum. Guests include **Pops Fernandez, Gary V** and **Andrew E.**

At 9 p.m. on Star World, "David Beckham's Story" goes into the private world of Manchester United's star player **David Beckham,** who married **Victoria,** Posh Spice of the famous Spice Girls.

The bio-special includes extensive footage of Beckham's most memorable matches, as well as shots of his family life at home, with his wife and their son, **Brooklyn.**

At 10 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "Wolves of the Sea" focuses on the killer whale, one of the most feared and least understood of all marine creatures. The program shows that the killer whale exhibits extraordinary intelligence, cunning and family loyalty.

In an incredible scene caught on film in this production, a killer whale gently returns a dazed seal pup to the shore after a lively game of chase.

Saturday, May 26 at 2 p.m on Star Movies, "One Good Cop" stars **Michael Keaton, Rene Russo** and **Anthony LaPaglia.** Keaton plays a dedicated police detective who becomes the guardian of his partner's three orphaned daughters.

At 7 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "Quest for Atocha" shows how treasure hunter **Mel Fisher**'s 16-year search for sunken riches ends in triumph with his discovery of the sunken Spanish galleon Nuestra Senora de Atocha.

His tremendous find included more than 1,000 silver bass, hundreds of pounds of gold bullion, glittering emeralds, gold chains and priceless artifacts.

At 8 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "Secrets of the Titanic" focuses on the wreckage of the luxury liner that sank in 1912.

They never married

STARS are famous for their marriages, divorces and remarriages, but some movie luminaries have managed to avoid that dizzying roundelay:

Al Pacino, one of the most acclaimed film stars in the business, is 61 years old but has never gotten hitched.

Ditto for **Greta Garbo,** who lived to be 84. And **Diane Keaton** (54 years old), **Jacqueline Bisset** (55) and **Julie Christie** (59).

The record holder among Hollywood's misogamists (people who hate marriage) is the legendary **Lillian Gish,** who never married, never even had any sexual rumors spread about her, and lived to be 99!

She started acting when she was a little girl, and continued to appear in movies until she was in her 80s. At the peak of her career, she worked 12 hours a day, seven days a week, and said that was why she never married.

"Somehow, marriage seemed like a fulltime job and I never had that kind of time," she was once quoted as saying. "I had a lot of good men friends, but I thought, why ruin their lives by marrying them?!"

Back to make-believe for stars who failed in polls

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

IT'S back to the movies and TV for the actors who lost in their political bids in the May 14 election.

Rudy Fernandez, who lost in his first political salvo for the Quezon City mayoralty, will resume his hosting chores in the action-drama series "Kasangga" on GMA 7. His wife **Lorna Tolentino** took over the hosting while he was busy campaigning.

Bong Revilla Jr., another contract star of GMA 7, will have to be content playing a barangay captain in his weekly sitcom, "Idol Ko si Kap," after losing in the gubernatorial race in Cavite.

Phillip Salvador can now accept more movie assignments, after his action-drama series "Verano" wrapped up on GMA. He lost in the race for vice mayor of Mandaluyong.

Tirso Cruz III will return to acting on his afternoon soap series. He lost in his bid for vice mayoralty in Las Piñas.

Armida Siguion-Reyna can return to producing quality movies again for Reyna Films, which she gave up when she became the chair of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) during the **Joseph Estrada** administration. *Tita* Midz was unsuccessful in her political bid for a congressional seat in Makati.

Nora Aunor is apparently not cut out to become a politician like her staunchest rival, **Vilma Santos.** Nora failed to get the gubernatorial seat in her native Camarines Sur, but her fans are certainly looking forward to another good movie starring the superstar, perhaps similar to "Sidhi," for which she won an acting award.

Edu Manzano can do more character roles again after being beaten by **Jejomar Binay** in the fight for the Makati mayoralty.

Sharon starrers

SKYCABLE subscribers had a treat Sunday night when Cinema One, the movie channel which replaced Pinoy Blockbuster, premiered the **Sharon Cuneta-Richard Gomez** romance, "Minsan Minahal Kita."

It was the cable premiere of the box-office hit, directed by **Olive Lamasan.** And Sky-first-day broadcast of Cinema One.

"Minsan Minahal Kita" was Sharon's only movie last year, and it was shot even before she became pregnant. It was the Valentine's Day offering of Star Cinema and it made a killing at the tills.

It was the second time I watched "Minsan Minahal Kita," after I saw it on the big screen last year, and the touching moments made me cry again.

Don't worry, if you failed to catch the cable premiere of "Minsan Minahal Kita," it will have regular repeats throughout the month on Cinema One, where Sharon is the star of the month. The channel is now promoting the rare one-on-one interview with the megastar, which will air on May 25.

After the airing of "Minsan Minahal Kita," Cinema One showed another Sharon Cuneta starrer, "Madrasta," where she stars with **Christopher de Leon.** It was another Olive Lamasan masterpiece.

In both movies, Sharon played offbeat roles. In "Minsan Minahal Kita," she played the other woman of Richard. In "Madrasta," she was stepmom to **Claudine Barretto.**

Too bad, I don't have SkyCable at home so I had to stay up late in my dad's house in BF Parañaque to watch both movies.

We hope Cinema One will show only quality movies and scrap those forgettable slapstick movies from its programming line-up.

Beauty pageant fanatic

FROM ALBERT Chan **Paran** of the University of Sto. Tomas Graduate School:

"My Saturday morning was really ruined. I was totally disappointed because of the unfortunate and sad fate (again, for the nth time now after 1973) of our own representative, Bb. Pilipinas-Universe **Zoraida Ruth Andam,** who didn't even make it to the semi-finals. Instead, she became one of the so-called 'backstage' beauties, just like **Nina Ricci Alagao** in last year's pageant.

"I truly believe our Filipina candidates are very smart, beautiful, always have grace under pressure and very competitive against foreign beauties. Only, they are not given a chance because of discrimination of the poor countries and politics.

"Zoraida, like other Philippine beauties in the past, is one of the favorite candidates in this year's pageant, along with the other bets from India, Venezuela, USA and Puerto Rico. She even won 1st runnerup in the best in national costume category. She's even more exotic than the candidate from Korea.

"One of the reasons Filipino fanatics of beauty pageants like me feel so sad is we tend to expect too much of our candidate after the publicity created for her.

"I suggest to Ms **Stella Marquez-Araneta,** chair of the Bb. Pilipinas Charities, to revive the previous and well-experienced beauty queens who are still capable and have a background in international beauty contests, instead of constantly searching for new ones.

"May I also suggest a rigid training program in the school of beauty queens in Venezuela for six months or more? After our candidate does her best and still doesn't make it to the top, I guess that's already God's will. We just have to wait for the next time our country will win another international beauty title."

Iloilo's top band in music series

"CROSSOVER Live," the special monthly series from 105.1 Crossover, will again take centerstage in Malate's hottest gimmick spot, Suburbia, tomorrow night, May 24.

For this month, "Crossover Live" features Iloilo's top band Dye Vest, who has conquered the Panay region and is now moving their act to Manila through their "Crossover Live" gig.

An evening with Dye Vest could have you crooning to the best Crossover music or dancing to the latest R&B tunes from the hottest artists.

Composed of Jed, Aliya Parcs and Radha (formerly of Kulay band) on vocals, Dye Vest has been very visible in Iloilo's night club scene.

The group has performed in street festivals and has done front acts for big name bands like Kulay. They also had regular gigs in the city's best bars like Spot, Highway 10 and Barracks.

For more details about this upcoming gig, tune in to 105.1 Crossover.

The special show is presented by Carnation Calcium Plus Ready-To-Drink, with Citibank Credit Card, Imarflex, Theragran-M, Café Puro Jade Blend and National Bookstore. It is also brought in part by Ericsson Mobile Phones.

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SPY KIDS - G 12:20, 2:10, 4:00, 5:55, 7:50, 9:45	SOMEONE LIKE YOU - P 13 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	MUMMY RETURNS - P 13 12:05, 2:30, 5:00, 7:35, 10:10

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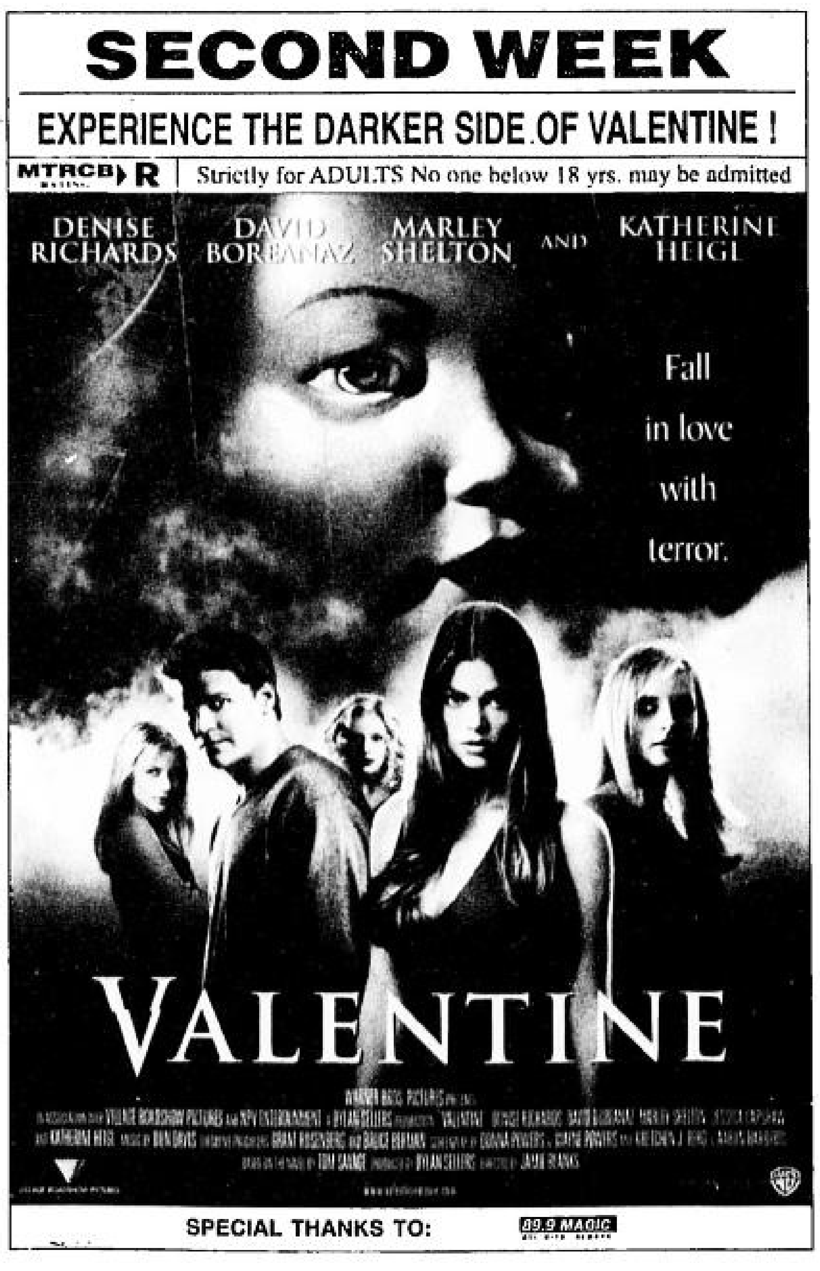

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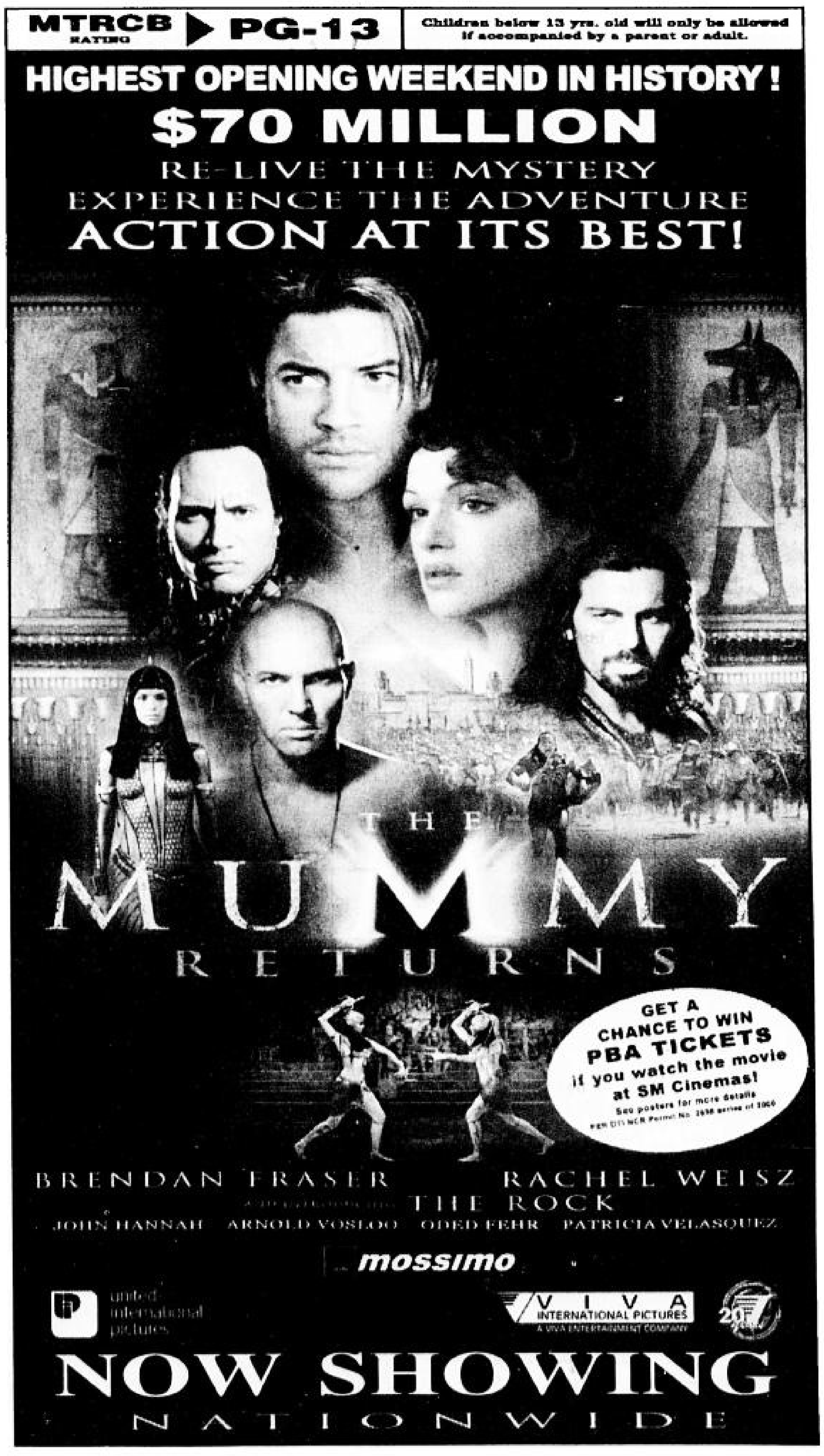

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Bob Dylan, the musical 'god,' turns 60

PARIS—Even if he has released one or two failures in his time, there is little doubt that Bob Dylan has produced some of the greatest rock albums ever recorded.

There is even a case for saying that Dylan, who turns 60 on May 24, is not just different from other songwriters but is in a league all his own, re-inventing the rules of the game many times over.

That has been true ever since his eponymous first album, released in 1962 when Dylan was a callow, fresh-faced 21-year-old, up from the country and taking New York's Greenwich Village scene by storm with his raw folk-influenced sound.

What Dylan had done was to take the format of traditional folk music, as learned from his hero Woody Guthrie, and grafted on an offbeat, often surreal sense of humor in his lyrics to mesmerizing effect.

Over the next 40 years, Dylan's trademark would be that of almost constant change, embracing every known style in popular music and perpetually reinventing himself so that he has never quite been pinned down to a specific identity.

And he has done so in the face of persistent criticism from his fans and detractors alike.

The first time he changed direction was in 1965, swapping acoustic for electric instruments and shocking a folk world which regarded the move as nothing short of sacrilege.

During a controversial 1966 tour of Britain, the switch was immortalized in a live recording of a concert in Manchester, England, during which an enraged fan can be heard to yell "Judas" as Dylan and his electrified band launched into the furious finale, "Like a Rolling Stone."

For many people, that was the moment that rock music was truly born. Dylan had turned a page and single-handedly taken popular music one step beyond into an unknown future which only he was able to repeatedly refine and redefine.

DYLAN reinvents himself and music.

Musically as well as in terms of his attitude, Dylan was the precursor of all that was to follow.

The rebellious youth of the protest song era with the likes of "Blowin' in the Wind" and "The Times They Are A-Changin'" would find echoes a decade and more later in the punk music movement.

The albums "Blonde on Blonde" and "Highway 61 Revisited," featuring such songs as "Like A Rolling Stone" and the enigmatic "Stuck Inside of Mobile With the Memphis Blues Again," were a driving force behind new directions for rock music.

But just as everyone else was jumping on the bandwagon, Dylan abandoned it, reverting to his folk roots with the landmark "John Wesley Harding," then flirting with country music on "Nashville Skyline," famous for his collaboration with Johnny Cash, followed by mainstream ballads on the much-derided "Self Portrait."

A return to form with the influential "Blood on the Tracks" of 1975 was abruptly followed by another departure, the melodic "Desire" and a subsequent musical fall from grace in the religion-obsessed "Slow Train Coming," "Saved" and "Shot of Love."

It would not be until 1997 with "Time Out of Mind," coinciding with a brush with death due to an illness, that Dylan was back to his best.

Through it all, he kept on touring, relentlessly and almost without end, with a series of bands of varying compatibility, from Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers to the Grateful Dead.

Fellow musicians are quick to credit Dylan with influencing almost every innovation that rock music has had to offer.

"Wherever great rock music is made, there is the shadow of Bob Dylan, over and over and over again," said Bruce Springsteen in one tribute.

Dylan's friendship with Roger McGuinn of the Byrds gave him the perfect vehicle for his songs to achieve a wider, commercial outlet, starting with the legendary version of "Mr. Tambourine Man" in 1965.

He was also responsible for a pioneering pop video—the film which accompanied "Subterranean Homesick Blues" saw Dylan standing in front of the camera displaying a succession of cue cards.

As a singer-songwriter, he spawned a rash of imitators in the 1970s, dubbed by one of them, Loudon Wainwright III, the "new Bob Dylan club of America."

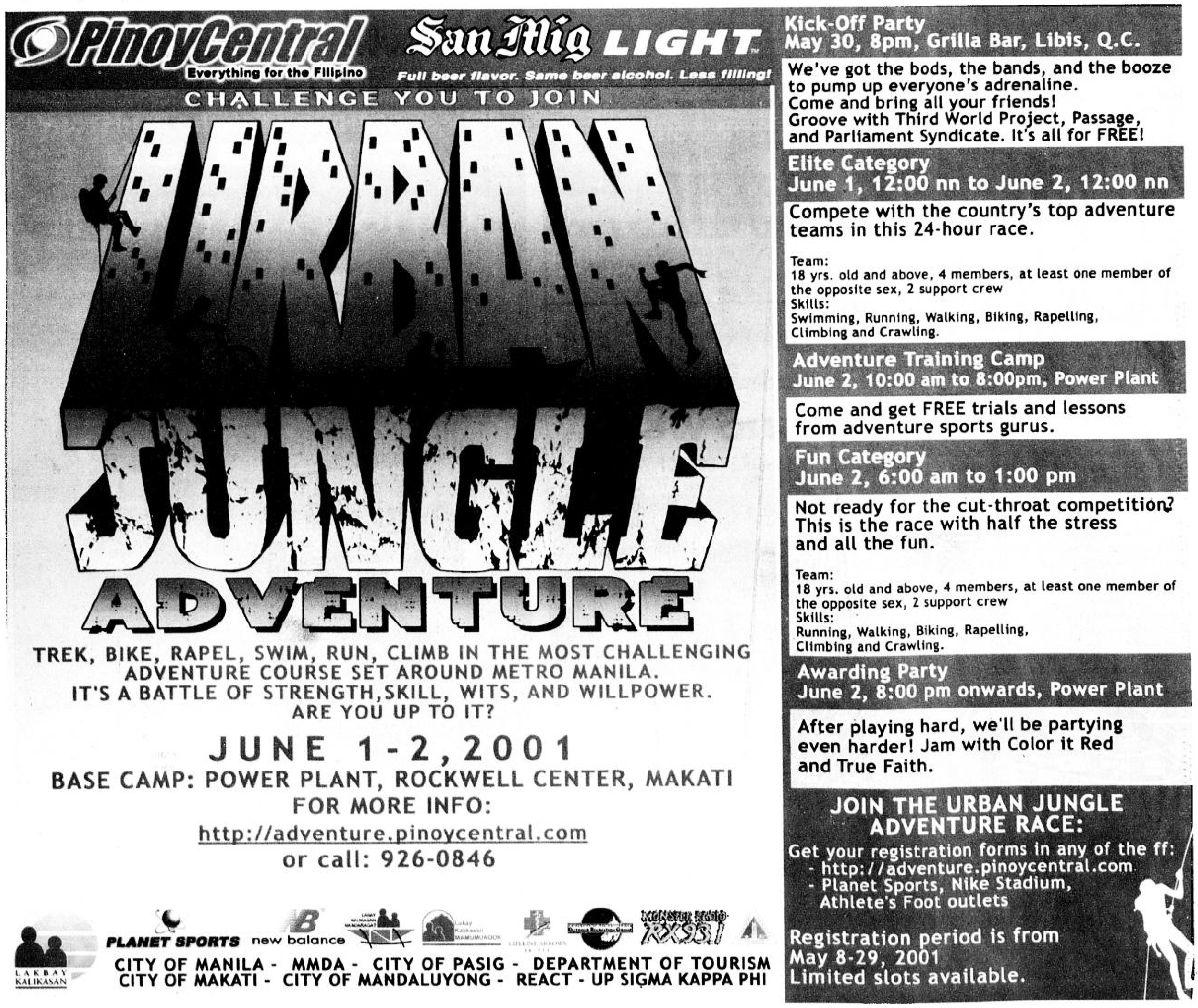
Dylan's influence on the Byrds followed logically on to the country-rock phase of the Eagles and later the all-American sound of Tom Petty.

Over three decades, the development of talents as diverse as Leonard Cohen, David Bowie, Jackson Browne, The Doors, Bruce Springsteen, Talking Heads, The Clash, Nick Cave and Lenny Kravitz would have been impossible without Dylan having broken the ground.

Dylan was arguably responsible for much of the evolution in popular music since the 1960s—either by creating it himself or creating the conditions which made it possible. He was the only singer rivaled by the Beatles, who split up 30 years ago.

As a, measure of the esteem in which he is held by his peers, Nick Cave tells the story of how Dylan sought him out at a rock festival in England in 1998 to tell him quietly he liked what he was doing.

"It was," Cave reflected, "as if God had come down from Heaven." *AFP*



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Fun Category
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Skills:
Running, Walking, Biking, Rapelling, Climbing and Crawling.

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BUSINESS

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Gov't rejects bids for 5-yr T-bonds

BTr threatens to cancel future auctions

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE BUREAU of Treasury yesterday threatened to scrap the issuance of the five-year government bonds in the next two months after the market insisted on getting higher returns for the long-term borrowings of the government.

In yesterday's bidding of the five-year bonds, the Treasury rejected P3 billion worth of offers at rates higher than the ceiling set by the government. It accepted only P1 billion worth of bids at 14 percent.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza yesterday said the Macapagal administration has P70 billion in available cash so there was no pressure to accept all the bids. "Thus, banks and investors must not insist on getting higher returns from risk-free state borrowings."

Traders said there was no appetite for a five-year paper carrying a 14-percent interest when the market was aware that the government would likely incur a deficit that might exceed the P145-billion projection.

"There are no takers in the secondary market so why would we buy at 14 percent? The expectation is by yearend, the rates will even go up because the government will not meet the deficit target," said a securities dealer of a foreign bank.

Edeza said the market was obviously testing if the Macapagal administration was desperate for cash.

"If they think we will accept 14.5 percent, they must be dreaming. We can keep on rejecting (the bids) if they would continue on jacking up the rates," said Edeza, who had accused banks and traders of trying to jack up the rates of one-year treasury bills last Monday.

The Treasury is scheduled to issue P2 billion worth of five-year bonds on June 14, June 28 and July 5.

Edeza said the Treasury might cancel these bond floats after the market indicated in yesterday's auction that it was not interested in the five-year bonds at a 14-percent yield.

"We have to give them a little breathing space. We may just increase the volume of the two- and three-year bonds and possibly scrap the five-year papers," said the national treasurer.

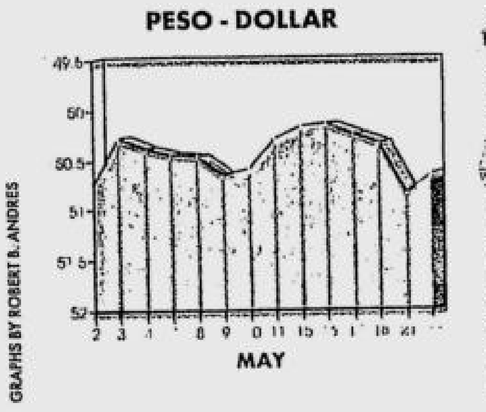
The government is scheduled to issue P2 billion worth of two-year bonds on June 7, June 14 and July 5 and three-year bonds worth P2 billion on June 7 and June 28.

Traders said the market was not convinced the Macapagal administration could contain its deficit within the P145-billion target this year after the Bureau of Internal Revenue sustained a collection shortfall of almost P10 billion in the first four months of the year.

EDEZA

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

P50.645 = $1

As of 5 p.m., May 22, 2001

Y122.88 = $1

The US dollar was trading at 122.88 as of 5 p.m., May 22, 2001

GOLD:$283.50/284.00 per ounce Hong Kong, May 22, 2001

May 22. 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.139341	1.000000	50.6090
Japan	Yen	0.009287	0.008151	0.4125
United Kingdom	Pound	1.641449	1.440700	72.9124
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.146081	0.128215	6.4888
Switzerland	Franc	0.652095	0.572344	28.9658
Canada	Dollar	0.741518	0.650830	32.9379
Singapore	Dollar	0.629575	0.552578	27.9654
Australia	Dollar	0.604521	0.530588	26.8525
Bahrain	Dinar	3.022287	2.652661	134.2485
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.303800	0.266645	13.4946
Brunei	Dollar	0.627218	0.550509	27.8607
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000099	0.000087	0.0044
Thailand	Baht	0.025002	0.021944	1.1106
UAE	Dirham	0.310236	0.272294	13.7805
Korea	Won	0.000876	0.000769	0.0389
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.877700	44.4195
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.448761	22.7113
France	Franc	0.152450	0.133805	6.7717
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.398283	20.1567
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.063785	3.2281
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.021758	1.1012
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000453	0.0229
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.147619	7.4708
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004378	0.2216
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005275	0.2670
Luxembourg	Franc	0.024790	0.021758	1.1012
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.114449	56.4011

STOCK MARKET

Stocks down

SHARES yesterday closed lower on continuing concern over the local political situation and the sluggish canvassing of votes from the May 14 municipal, provincial and congressional elections, traders said.

The weak peso and the Morgan Stanley Capital International's recent announcement that it was cutting the country's weighting in its All-Country World Index also gave investors reason to defer investments in the local equities market, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 0.56 point at 1,451.20, after a 0.2-percent gain Monday.

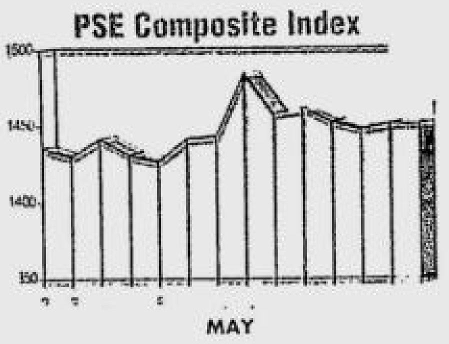
Decliners outnumbered gainers 37 to 28, while 40 issues were unchanged.

Ayala Corp. shares closed down 10 centavos at P7.50. San Miguel "A" shares closed down 50 centavos at P46.50, while the "B" shares rose 50 centavos at P49.50.

Apart from the cross sales of Pure Foods shares, however, market activity was quiet, tempered by the lack of positive developments and thin liquidity, said BPI Securities assistant vice president Spencer Yap.

"There's nothing happening, except for some bargain hunting in select issues," said Yap.

AP



(See stock market report on Page B4)

CADP-CAC output up

THE CENTRAL Azucarera Don Pedro (CADP) Group registered the highest raw sugar production in the industry at 4.255 million bags, or nearly 16 percent of total industry output, for crop year 2000-2001 ending March 25.

Statistics obtained from the Sugar Regulatory Administration indicate that the country's total sugar output reached 28.480 million bags. This was produced from 16.81 million tons of sugar cane milled during the same period. CADP and its 73-percent owned subsidiary Central Azucarera de La Carlota (CAC) milled a total of 2.60 million tons of sugarcane during the period. This represents a 15.5-percent share of the gross cane tonnage of the sugar industry.

"The excellent performance of CAC boosted the CADP Group's overall sugar output," CADP president Miguel A. Gaspar explained. CAC's sugar factory, based in La Carlota City in Negros Occidental, posted total sugar output of 2.652 million bags during the same period, up 28 percent from the 1.873 million bags registered in the previous crop year. Cane tonnage increased 15.5 percent from 1.33 million tons in 1999-2000 to 1.54 million tons during the current year.

Bond issue limited to $1B

THE MACAPAGAL administration yesterday said it would limit its bond issue next month to no more than $1 billion unless foreign markets would offer attractive rates

Finance Undersecretary Juanita Amatong said the government intended to comply with an agreed strategy to borrow only 25 percent of its requirements from foreign markets with the bulk of 75 percent to come from domestic sources. The government earlier set its borrowing requirements this year at P191.5 billion.

"I suppose we can go for as much as $1 billion but we want to stick to our borrowing strategy since the local market remains liquid," said Amatong.

A $1-billion bond issue will exceed the P47.88-billion limit set by the government for its foreign borrowings this year

Amatong noted, however, that the borrowing strategy was flexible and that it could be changed, particularly if the government would receive attractive offers on the sovereign bonds it plans to float through a deal roadshow next month.

Last week, Amatong said the administration was planning to raise between $500 and $700 million through the issuance of bonds in June after a series of roadshows to be held in the United States, Japan and Europe.

The finance undersecretary earlier said the government had decided to defer indefinitely the plan to borrow as much as $200 million from a foreign investment bank this month. *Clarissa S. Batino*

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How do you solve a problem like PNB?

By Elena R. Torrijos

(First of a series)

SPECIAL REPORT

FOR the government, the Philippine National Bank has historically been one large pain in the neck.

Since its birth in 1916, PNB has been resurrected with billions worth of taxpayers' money four times—and a fifth effort is not far off. The bank is bleeding heavily as 40 percent of its total loan portfolio consists of bad loans. It is burdened by a high level of non-performing assets and worn out by a significantly reduced deposit base. With at least P25 billion in debts it owed the government, the ailing bank has found itself in a mess that public officials are trying desperately to unwound.

While the closure of rural or thrift banks, arguably even of small commercial banks, has little impact on the country's financial system, that of PNB would send crippling shock waves throughout the economy.

Thousands of companies with funds trapped in the bank would fold up, dragging along with them the future of their employees and suppliers. Also, PNB's closure could decimate the government's financial health. If the bank were to be shut down today, the government would "lose" around P100 billion, covering over P30 billion in government deposits and P42 billion in insured deposit liabilities, P25 billion in emergency loans, and the government's 16-percent equity interest. Regulators have, thus, come to the conclusion that the systemic risk posed by the possible failure of PNB is too massive to allow.

The question, now being debated, is how to address the problem once and for all. As of this writing, the government is reportedly inclined to pursue a "reverse privatization," meaning converting part, if not all, of the P25 billion in emergency loans it extended to PNB in October last year into equities so it can regain control of the bank. The argument goes: Once the bank has been nationalized and rehabilitated, it can then be sold at a higher price, providing the upside to the group that put up the necessary money in the first place, which is the government. The majority shareholder, the group of tobacco magnate and former Marcos crony Lucio Tan, won't reap any of the rewards once PNB is revived, considering the bank's latest crisis blew up under their watch. Other options earlier considered were a restructuring of the P25-billion emergency assistance and a *dacion en pago*—payment in kind—arrangement.

The government realizes that any proposed solution will have to contend with Tan. How he was able to take over the bank has been a clouded issue, but just as important to know is how things came to be the way they stand today.

In the beginning

PNB was established in 1916, when the Philippines was still under US colonial rule. As one untrained officer after another took over the reins of managing the bank, PNB became a certified banking disaster five years after it opened its doors, requiring the government to raise the bank's authorized capital to P50 million from P20 million.

Subsequent years were no better given PNB's large bad loans to the sugar industry. On Nov. 24, 1924, the legislature passed the Rehabilitation Act, which called for a comprehensive reorganization of the bank and a write-off of its losses against capital.

PNB's operations continued relatively smoothly but suffered during the Japanese occupation, as deposits were transferred to the Bank of Taiwan. By the end of 1944, all banks in the liberated areas were ordered closed and it was only the following year that PNB re-opened with the government's help.

From that time on until the early 1980s, PNB generally enjoyed good health and profitability. By 1985, however, it was on the brink of an imminent collapse as a result of the country's economic and political turmoil.

The Edsa Revolution ushered in a new lease on life for PNB. The bank was saved by a rehabilitation plan that transferred P47 billion worth of PNB's non-performing assets and P55 billion in liabilities to the national government. The bank underwent streamlining and reduced personnel through the separation of 1,800 employees under an early retirement incentive plan.

Privatization

PNB's "privatization" process began in June 1989, with an initial public offering of 30 percent of its total outstanding stock, or 10.8 million shares worth about P1.8 billion held by the Republic of the Philippines.

PHILIPPINE National Bank's headquarters in Pasay City during its construction. Over the years, the bank has drawn the most out of taxpayers' money than any financial institution.

Well-known throughout the countryside and with its extensive branch network, PNB had no problem attracting interests from a wide base of investors. On its first trading day, PNB shares surged an average of P30 each to about P250 in the country's two stock exchanges. Its stock price soared over the following months, so that by August, it reached P400, P500 in September and P642 in October. Its trajectory faltered only because of the December 1989 coup attempt.

Handling the bank then were PNB president Edgardo Espiritu and PNB chair Joker Arroyo, who were there from 1987 to 1992. Sources said there had been over-reporting of profits at that time because of some issues concerning debt swap transactions.

In 1992, the government took another step in privatizing PNB through a second public offering of 8.083 million shares. The offering was again successful, and the bank's stock value then reached P277 a share. The PNB president for a year then was Gabriel Singson prior to his appointment as Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas governor in 1993. Taking over from him was Arsenio Bartolome III, who stayed there until 1995, when Peter Favila succeeded him.

The last phase of the privatization program came in December 1995 following the settlement of the issue of transferred liabilities. Since its last rehabilitation, PNB had been trying to collect billions of unrecorded advances to government that the bank had recognized in its books. The issue was finally laid to rest after the government issued non-transferable long-term discounted government papers.

By the end of this "privatization" process, the government, which raised P2.5 billion from the sale of its PNB shares and warrants, had a 46-percent stake in the bank left. Yet, because of the piecemeal sale of PNB stakes to extremely diversified groups of investors, the government was still in full control of the bank. Only Mark Mobius' Templeton Fund out of Hong Kong had a significantly large block of 13 percent.

In an interview, Roberto de Ocampo, who was finance secretary during the period, explained there were arguments for and against the government totally getting out of the bank, or even other erstwhile government-owned and -controlled companies like Petron Corp.

He explained that there was the view that the government should maintain a "golden share" in the bank to ensure that an erstwhile public monopoly would not transform into a private one. And, of course, the strategy of selling stakes piece by piece and raising large amounts of revenues without giving up valuable control was very appealing.

In hindsight, the government would have been far better off selling its entire holdings in PNB then and that could have averted the situation the government, the bank and the public now find themselves in. *(To be continued)*

Dumpsite can power 1,000 homes, says study

THE CARMONA dumpsite in Cavite can light up at least a thousand households, according to a recent government study.

Jointly conducted by the PNOC Exploration Corp., Department of Science and Technology, and Metro Manila Development Authority, the P11.4-million study concluded that the gas reserves at the dumpsite was enough to generate some 100 kilowatts of electricity.

"Since the decomposition of the garbage is very rapid, there is a need to immediately harness its full potential," the PNOC-EC said in a statement.

It added that the project team was considering several options to tap the dumpsites gas reserves.

The team is considering whether to supply or sell the electricity to the local community, the Manila Electric Co. or to nearby industries.

It is also looking into the possibility of using the power for MMDA's onsite operations.

The team will continue to operate the Carmona landfill gas project for the next four to six years. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

Gov't to seek $600-M public sector loan

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MACAPAGAL administration said yesterday it would negotiate a $600-million public sector reform loan with the World Bank and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

Finance Undersecretary Juanita Amatong told reporters a public sector reform program was earlier considered with the World Bank, but it did not materialize.

Amatong said the public sector reform loan should replace a $400-million banking sector reform loan that the government decided to scrap, and would exclude conditions involving troubled lender Philippine National Bank.

"We could probably negotiate for a new program like the public sector reform loan once we allow the banking sector reform loan to lapse. It could be worth $600 million, but it still has to be negotiated," she said.

Amatong said the $600-million public sector reform loan that the government would work out with the World Bank and JBIC would involve conditions related to fiscal discipline, government re-engineering and structural reform programs.

"We will try not to commit ourselves to conditions that are not doable in the medium term as well as legislative measures that we have no control over," she said.

A finance team to be led by incoming Finance Secretary Isidro Camacho was scheduled to meet with the World Bank in Malacañang yesterday to discuss existing programs with the lender as well as what the government intended to do with the $400-million banking sector reform loan.

The Macapagal administration decided earlier to cancel a $400-million banking sector reform loan from the World Bank.

Outgoing Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said the government would instead negotiate another loan, also with the World Bank, within the next six to 12 months, and that it would press for less stringent conditions.

A person familiar with the matter said the Macapagal administration found the conditions attached by the World Bank to its $400-million banking sector reform loan too tough to comply with, particularly those involving Philippine National Bank.

The government isn't sure what to do with PNB. It has yet to decide whether to sell all its remaining stake in PNB, which now stands at 15 percent, or do a "reverse privatization" and regain majority control of the bank.

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Private sector losing sources of capital funds to government

THE GOVERNMENT is crowding out the private sector in the domestic debt market.

Figures released yesterday by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed that with the government borrowing aggressively, the country's commercial banks were lending less to private companies.

The central bank reported that loans extended by 45 banks to the private sector slowed down to 5.5 percent in March to P1.41 trillion.

Monetary authorities stressed, however, that credit growth in March was more aggressive compared to a 1.8-percent growth a year earlier, though lower than the 5.7-percent growth on a month-on-month basis.

A slowdown in bank lending indicates slower economic activity as individuals and businesses secure loans that help spur economic growth whether as part of consumer spending or expansion in business activities.

The Bangko Sentral projected a 10-percent improvement in credit this year from a 7-percent growth in bank lending last year.

Net domestic credits, a record of all borrowings in the local system, grew to 11.2 percent in March from 10.3 percent the previous month. The growth was largely on account of a significant increase in public sector credit to 23.1 percent in March from 18.6 percent the previous month.

This as opposed to a contraction in private sector credit to 6.8 percent from 7.2 percent in February.

While the Bangko Sentral would like to portray an increased credit to the private sector, which easily translates to aggressive bank lending activity, analysts believe the more important picture is that the government may already be crowding out the private sector for funds.

The rise in credits to the public sector, a central bank official admits, reflects an increase in holdings of government securities, like treasury bills and bonds. Bank lending to the government in the form of purchases of government securities are not reflected in the total loan portfolio.

The Bangko Sentral said bank lending activity in March was concentrated on sectors like electricity, gas, and water; community, social, and personal services; wholesale and retail trade; and manufacturing.

Loans to the manufacturing sector continued to account for 27.8 percent of the total followed by the financial institutions, real estate and business services with 25.7 percent. The wholesale and retail trade accounted for 13.9 percent.

The three sectors accounted for more than 75 percent of the total loan portfolio.

The Bangko Sentral had said it would ease its monetary stance further to allow domestic liquidity to grow to as much as 15 percent by yearend from 10.5 percent as of March.

Allowing domestic liquidity to grow means the central bank will permit more funds to flow into the system to help encourage growth and economic activity.

Domestic liquidity is a measure of money supply that includes money held by individuals, institutional investors and banks.

Germany's biggest chartered airline considers RP operations

THE LOCAL tourism industry got a boost from German investors as they rallied behind Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon in calling for chartered flights to the country from Germany.

German First Secretary of Economic and Commercial Section Axel Gohner said Germany's biggest chartered airline, LTU Airline, had expressed interest in operating in the Philippines.

Gohner said he had spoken to LTU officials, who told him the German carrier was keenly awaiting the completion of the Naia III Terminal.

The construction of Naia III is partly financed by private and government institutions in Germany.

"When Naia III is completed and all these big German airlines come in, it will do a lot in Germany to attract people. These will serve as the Philippines' close links to Germany," Gohner said.

This developed as Gordon spoke before the German Club and was flooded with queries about the lack of air traffic to some major destinations in the country like Subic, Clark and Puerto Princesa.

Gordon told the group that he had already submitted to the Air Transportation Office a list of airports for renovation in order to accommodate more air flights.

At the same time, he appealed for support from the group, saying: "You know that we are a cash-strapped nation. We are looking for assistance in order to address the problems of our tourism industry."

Gordon added: "You are all veterans here, having lived in this country for a long time now. You know that life is good here. Help us spread the word back to Germany that the Philippines is still a safe and comfortable tourist destination."

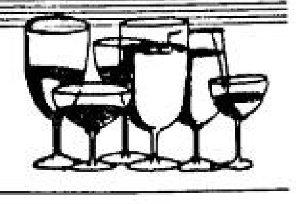
The tourism chief challenged the German community to help develop the German market.

"We have good products here, but we have to stitch it for connectivity. We need to grow with and from each other."

"The department has developed local tour packages that will cater to the German niche market—the hikers, the divers, those who are interested in unique landscapes, we have all that in the country," he added.

Tomfoolery

COCKTALES



By Victor C. Agustin

THROUGH an emissary, former Trade Undersecretary Tomas Alcantara sent word that he was never at the *miting de avance* of the pro-Erap forces in Iligan City as was reported in this column May 18.

Tom, who had shared adjoining rooms with Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo when they were second-liners at the Department of Trade and Industry, even claimed that, per the emissary, he was on a "special mission" for GMA to convince the Erap forces to abandon their crooked idol in favor of the country's number one *lavandera.*

Informed of Alcantara's denials, GMA relatives from Iligan have instead sent Malacañang a videotape of the Iligan rally, according to the grapevine. During that rally, Tom was allegedly even introduced to the audience as a relative of local businessman Jojo Borja.

The result of Alcantara's "mission"? A 13-0 win in the city alright, but in favor of the Erap senatorial candidates.

Sour aftertaste

OUTSIDE of Tagaytay Highlands, it is not generally known that former Trade Minister Roberto Ongpin, who has a penchant for cool mountain air, horses, and beautiful women (not necessarily in that order), also maintains a tangerine farm in Itogon, Benguet.

Registered under the name of Highland Citrus Corp., the Ongpin farm is an 80-plus-hectare sprawl of former forest reservation area acquired, according to the grapevine, during the 1970s when Bobby O was a powerful member of the Marcos Cabinet.

Like the Tagaytay Highlands before, the Benguet farm is now a source of, although minor, headache to Ongpin in that his local caretakers are being accused of land-grabbing an adjoining three-hectare farm.

The lesser farm, titled under the name of the Siy family, owners of the Concorde Hotel of Baguio, was raided past midnight early this month by a platoon of hooded gunmen after the Siys decided to fence off the property.

The gunmen, who disarmed at gunpoint and then drove away the security guards of Siys, claimed that the Siy property had all these years been planted with tangerines by Highland Citrus.

The Siys, in turn, are suing Highland Citrus for forcible entry with damages, saying they acquired the property with the proper TCT from Baguio councilor Larry Carino in 1994.

Dark as a dungeon

MERCURY Drug, Woman, Goodwill Bookstore, and Cinderella in Glorietta IV all have no electricity for the past three weeks now, after a construction crew digging nearby accidentally struck a key Meralco power line.

According to the grapevine, the Manila Electric Co. is asking for two more weeks to restore electricity in that section of the mall. Meanwhile, sales, already anemic because of the lingering Erap virus, have plunged to Edsa III levels.

Short takes

- THE AYALAS are building a row of townhouses, not condominiums, on top of the new Greenbelt wing that is now being carved out of the open-air carpark fronting the New World Renaissance hotel.

  The townhouses, available for yearly leases, will be on the top floor looking out on the park, with the shopping mall and car park floors below.

- AND yet another English broadsheet is coming out soon, captained by columnist and singing host Rodolfo Romero and ex-INQUIRER editor Rosauro Acosta. According to mischievous colleagues, the slogan of the putative paper, tentatively christened Courier, is "Never Say Die."

Heard through the grapevine

THE ROW between The CompanY and the husband of Citibank country manager Catherine Weir has not been settled. (For backgrounders, check the March 30 and April 4 issues of Cocktales.)

The band, apparently under legal advisement, has rejected a written apology from Weir's husband.

The Romulo Mabanta law firm, in turn, has taken on the negotiations in behalf of the Weirs.

Both sides have stipulated that no press interviews be given during the negotiations.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

COUNTRY SHARES
AS OF MAY 23, 2001

	BUYING	SELLING
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB A/B*	2,000,000/2,100,000 *	-
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	820,000	850,000
CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB	100,000	110,000
CAMP JOHN HAY	350,000	400,000
CAPITOL HILLS	140,000	- *
CELEBRITY SPORTS	210,000	215,000
CLUB FILIPINO	-	350,000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B*/C**	-	450,000*/700,000 **
FOREST HILLS A/B*/C**	280,000	290,000/350,000*/450,000 **
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	400,000/445,000 *	405,000/450,000 *
METRO CLUB	165,000	175,000/180,000 *
MANILA POLO CLUB	3,500,000	4,000,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A/B*	850,000/950,000 *	900,000/990,000 *
ORCHARD A/B*/C**	280,000/500,000 **	300,000/425,000 *
QUEZON CITY SPORTS	230,000	255,000
RIVIERA GOLF A/B*	250,000	280,000/420,000 *
ROCKWELL CLUB	645,000	650,000
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS CC/GOLF*	480,000/1,100,000 *	485,000/1,100,000 *
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	850,000	875,000
VALLE VERDE	175,000	-
WACK WACK	10,000,000	10,500,000

TEL. NOS. 853-1626 or 853-1627

RP tourism seen losing to Vietnam

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

THE COUNTRY is fast losing ground in the region's tourism business with more tourists now going to Vietnam than the Philippines and with Brunei currently being groomed as a hub for the New Zealand-South America route.

Freedom to Fly Coalition spokesperson Mila Abad said this was mainly because of delays in the opening up of the country's airline industry.

Abad warned that the Philippines' protectionist policy on aviation would hinder the country's growth as a tourism center in the region.

She said that tourist arrivals in Vietnam reached 2.2 million last year compared to the Philippines' 2.1 million. With this development, the Philippines has lagged further behind Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia.

"We are likely to slip further in the ranking with the 10.44-percent drop in tourist arrivals in the first quarter this year," Abad said. She said that if the Philippines would continue its protectionist policies, even Cambodia could surge ahead with its ongoing plan of flourishing airline industry after opening up to foreign competition.

The Philippines has also lost a golden opportunity to be the region's gateway to South America as New Zealand recently picked Brunei as its hub. The route will cut travel time to South America to 17 hours from 42 hours via North America. Abad said New Zealand had initially set its sights on the Philippines but the delay in liberalizing its air policy forced them to look at other strategic locations.

Abad said the coalition was urging the Civil Aviation Board to finally approve in its May 28 meeting the implementing rules and regulations of Executive Order No. 219 which laid down the blueprint for the liberalization of Philippine airline industry six years ago.

Still, Abad was worried that the revival of the Civil Aviation Consultative Council could again set back government's efforts to liberalize the aviation industry.

She noted that protectionist groups have cited the country's lack of infrastructure, particularly airport facilities, as a reason to the delay in the opening of the aviation industry to foreign competition.

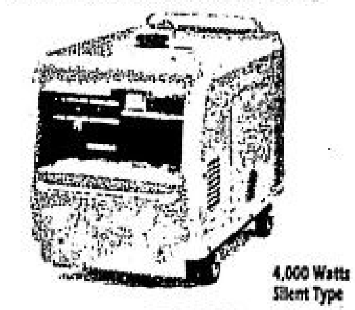
ITOGON - SUYOC MINES, INC.

POSTPONEMENT OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS:

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual Stockholders' Meeting of Itogon-Suyoc Mines, Inc. has been postponed from **May 25, 2001** to **July 16, 2001** at 8:30 a.m. at the Valle Verde Country Club, Antipolo Ballroom, Captain Henry Vargas St., Bo. Ugong, Pasig City.

JOCELYN I. SANCHEZ-SALAZAR
Corporate Secretary



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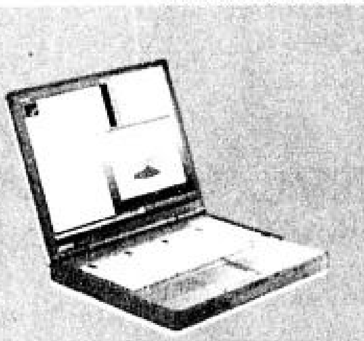

intel inside pentium III

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PROMO PERIOD: May 16 to May 31, 2001

AMC scouts for firms to buy

By Doris C. Dumlao

WITH a cash reserve of P1.37 billion, Alaska Milk Corp. is aggressively scouting for consumer products manufacturing companies to acquire to position itself for faster growth over the long term.

AMC president and COO Wilfred Steven Uytengsu Jr. yesterday told the company's stockholders that while consumer spending continued to be sluggish, there were indications that a rebound would happen soon. "And it is now the best time to position (the company) for growth through acquisitions aside from continuously improving the existing milk business."

"Economic and political conditions have largely impeded our efforts toward new acquisitions. The dearth of opportunities and the less than ideal economic and political environment in the last two years have not presented suitable investment opportunities that will have a good strategic fit and provide desirable financial returns for Alaska," Uytengsu said.

However, Uytengsu said the company now needed to scout for acquisition opportunities amid the fast-changing business landscape triggered by the consolidation of certain other food companies.

Food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. recently acquired Pure Foods Corp. from the Ayala group.

Uytengsu said AMC, for its part, would actively look for consumer brands that may not necessarily be related to its core milk business but would bring value to its business.

The company considers for its acquisition efforts firms engaged in the manufacturing of biscuits, snacks and confectionery.

"We'd be prepared to use up our entire cash reserves if necessary if the object of our acquisition efforts would improve our prospects for long-term growth," Uytengsu said.

But Uytengsu said AMC would be careful in choosing its targets and would definitely not engage in a bidding war with bigger companies because this might result in an overpriced purchase. He said the company had conducted diligence audits on certain potential acquisitions in the past but AMC did not find the right company that would fit to its operations. In some cases, AMC lost the acquisition target to bigger groups.

Uytengsu said that aside from acquisitions, AMC would be willing to look at joint venture arrangements or even a merger with another consumer group should opportunities arise.

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CPU Vcore and VIO settings via BIOS
AGP Power Voltage setting via BIOS

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AEV expanding IT-based venture

By Doris C. Dumlao

CEBU-BASED Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc. is expanding its information technology portfolio with fresh investments in IT School Moravia Holdings Corp.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, AEV CFO Juan Antonio Bernad also said the company was subscribing to additional shares in the e-purchasing consortium Bayantrade.com.

Bayantrade.com is a P1-billion joint venture that also involves Ayala Corp., Benpres Holdings, JG Summit Holdings, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and United Laboratories Inc.

Moravia Holdings is engaged in IT-related business. It provides technical training and knowledge in, but not limited to, applications and development of software, programs and systems operations, integration and solutions, as well as all other aspects of the said field.

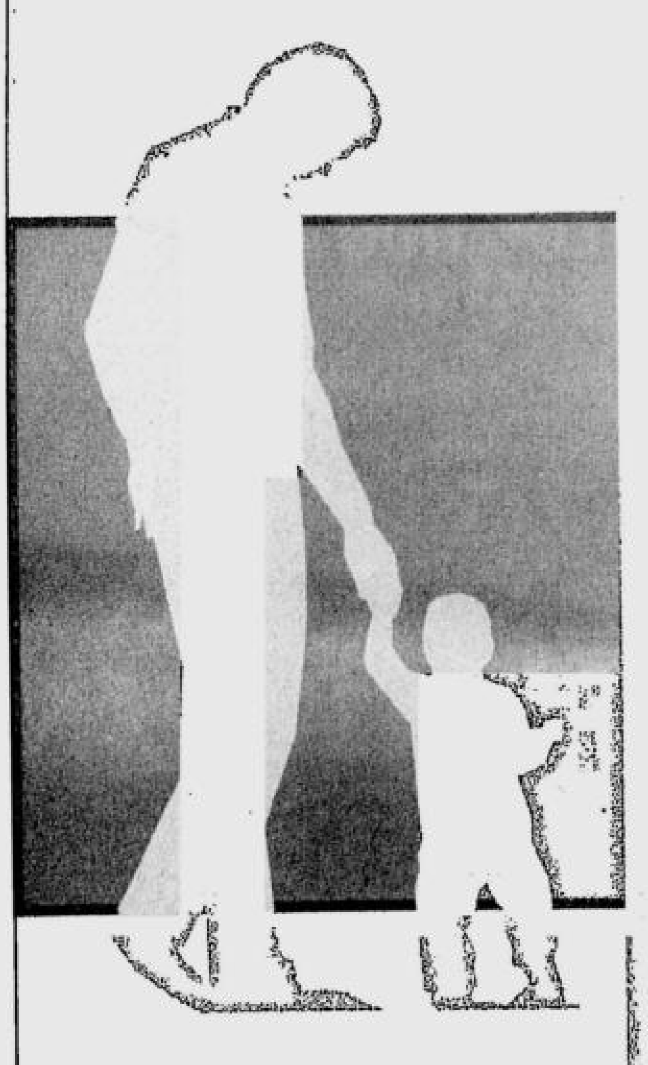
Bayantrade.com, for its part, provides an electronic marketplace for purchasing goods and services in order to allow small and medium enterprises wider access to local and international business partners. Services currently available are electronic procurement, e-catalogues, online auctions and e-logistics.

He said that the AEV's board had approved the purchase of P7 million worth of shares in Moravia and P6.25 million additional subscription to Bayantrade.com.

But AEV, for its part, is concentrating on its core businesses of power generation, power distribution and banking. However, it has embarked on new business-to-business, business-to-consumer (B2C) and even business-to-employee (B2E) initiatives to cope with the challenges of the so-called new economy.

The group also has an existing foundation that aims to help public schools beef up their computerization program.

For this year, AEV has earmarked over P1 billion to expand its core businesses.



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On June 17, Fathers' Day, INQUIRER Classifieds will publish personal ads dedicated to the fathers at a discounted rate of P50 per line or P150 per column centimeters.

For more information, visit any INQUIRER branch or call 897-2535.

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- Rate is applicable on the June 17 issue only

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love,
Issa

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Happy Fathers' Day Tatay Thank you for everything. I love you. Rose

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cost: P165 vat inclusive

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DISCLOSURES

ELECTED to the board of First Philippine Holdings Corp. were Oscar Lopez, Augusto Almeda-Lopez, Peter Garrucho Jr., Oscar Hilado, Elpidio Ibañez, Christian Monsod, Vitaliano Nañagas II, Vicente Paterno, Steve Psinakis and Washington Sycip.

* * *

ALASKA Milk Corp. declared a P0.07 per share cash dividend payable on the following dates: June 30 for stockholders as of June 15; Sept. 30 for stockholders as of Aug. 30; Dec. 31 for stockholders as of Nov. 30, and March 30 next year for stockholders as of Feb. 28.

* * *

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. declared a P0.12 per common share cash dividend in favor of stockholders of record as of June 5. It is payable on June 25.

* * *

UNIOIL Resources & Holdings Co. Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from June 13 to July 13 at 9 a.m.

* * *

DIVERSIFIED Financial Network Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 1, 2 p.m. at Ballrooms 1 & 2 of Mandarin Oriental. Only stockholders of record as of April 30 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa*

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Tuesday, May 22, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.4	58,000
Bank of Tte Phil. Islands	76	76.5	76	76.5	89,100
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	43.5	43.5	43	43	21,000
Global Business Bank Inc.	70	80	70	80	400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	211	211	209	210	60,870
Philippine National Bank	53	55.5	53	55.5	254,200
Security Bank Corp.	20.5	20.5	20.25	20.5	23,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	800
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	15,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	30,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1310	1325	1310	1325	5,330
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1160	1180	1160	1175	49,010
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	41	41	41	41	4,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.42	0.43	0.42	0.42	640,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	685	690	685	690	10,120
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.046	5,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3	3	3	3	20,000
Piltel	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.49	460,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	220,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	720	720	715	715	29,110
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.048	0.049	0.046	0.047	221,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	41	41	41	41	36,200
Manila Electric Co. B	55.5	56.5	55.5	56.5	365,800
Petron Corp.	1.84	1.86	1.82	1.86	1,798,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	10,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	10,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.7	1.92	1.7	1.84	21,166,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.36	790,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.1	1.14	1.1	1.12	826,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	4,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	111,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.25	13.5	13.25	13.5	271,400
Liberty Flour Mills Inc.	19	19	19	19	110,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	27.5	28	27	28	213,800
Pancake House Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	30,000
Pure Foods Corp. A	120	120	120	120	1,000
RFM Corp.	1	1	1	1	190,000
San Miguel Corp. A	46.5	47	46.5	46.5	14,400
San Miguel Corp. B	48.5	50	48.5	49.5	367,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	220,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	10,000
Ayala Corp.	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.5	502,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	273,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12.25	12.5	12.25	12.5	3,100
A. Soriano Corp.	0.32	0.35	0.32	0.33	1,000,000
APC Group Inc.	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.18	680,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	36,000,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.23	90,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.36	1.4	1.36	1.38	1,122,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	2,100,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	210,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.12	1.06	1.12	212,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	24	24	24	24	50,300
Global Equities Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	10,000
Ionics Inc.	11.75	12	11.75	12	32,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	115,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77	280,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.49	590,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	200,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	7	7	7	7	12,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	400,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	40,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	150,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	5,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	2,000
Music Corp.	2.6	2.65	2.6	2.65	164,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	80,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	1,000,000
SPI Technologies Inc	15	15	14.25	14.25	315,900
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.48	0.49	0.46	0.47	17,840,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.5	0.5	160,000
Philippine Racing Club	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	10,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr	41	41	41	41	1,337,200
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	520	520	510	510	8,170
Equitable PCI Bank-War	3.5	3.5	3.35	3.35	4,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	700	700	700	700	200
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0026	0.0034	0.0026	0.0032	693,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series U	10	10	10	10	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.039	0.04	0.037	0.038	52,600,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.6	3,346,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	790,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.34	1,160,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.18	2.2	1,155,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	1,913,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	300,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	19,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	14,000,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	1,000,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.21	0.21	0.2	0.205	1,410,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	10,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	11,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0046	0.0042	0.0046	311,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	2,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.225	0.23	0.225	0.23	510,000
OIL					
Imperial Res	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	2,700,000
Interport Res	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	2,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	10,000
Pacifica	0.015	0.015	0.012	0.012	70,600,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	100,000
South China Resources Inc	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	10,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	607,510	99,837,830.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,117,786,020	6,802,165,720.00
PRO	8,664,000	34,529,180.00
Mining	369,920,000	2,178,400.00
OIL	76,420,000	1,013,700.00
GRAND TOTALS:	1,573,397,530	6,939,724,830.00

	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	612.89	UP 3.56
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,982.59	DOWN 0.17
PRO	564.00	UP 0.09
Mining	1,238.62	UP 3.45
OIL	1.45	UP 0.01
All Shares Index	781.27	UP 15.64
Composite	1,451.20	DOWN 0.56

NO. OF ADVANCES: 28; NO. OF DECLINES: 37; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 40; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 105; NO. OF TRADES: 2,455

AGI earmarks ₱5B for expansion plan

By Doris C. Dumlao

ALLIANCE Global Inc., the holding firm of McDonald's franchise holder in the Philippines George Yang, is setting aside P5 billion to expand its food and beverage businesses within the next two years.

In a statement, AGI also announced that it posted a net income of P88 million in the first quarter, 12 percent higher than the P78 million yielded the same period in 1999.

The increase in profits during the period was fueled by a 193-percent rise in revenues to P467.4 million, up from only P160 million the same quarter last year. Sales, which accounted for the lion's share of revenues, rose almost fourfold to P392 million from year-ago level of P99 million.

"Food and beverage contributed to the increase in sales volume following the acquisition of McKester Piknik International Ltd., an overseas holding firm, in the second half of 2000," AGI corporate information officer and CFO Dina Inting said.

AGI's subsidiary, Alliance Growers Holdings Inc., spent P562.5 million ($12.5 million) to acquire the US-based food manufacturer last year.

The company's total asset base thus rose by 20 percent to P4.97 billion as of the first quarter compared to the level as of end-2000. Stockholders' equity rose to P4.2 billion from P3.98 billion as of end-2000.

Inting explained that the company improved its cash flows with a cash balance of P965 million during the quarter.

"AGI maintained zero bank loans and relied on internally generated funds to finance its operations and projects," she said.

DTI to allow assemblers to re-export SKDs

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry will allow vehicle assemblers to re-export all semi-knocked down (SKD) vehicles that they have brought in but failed to sell in the domestic market.

Trade Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas II said that this re-export option would reduce the penalties to assemblers who failed to live up to their commitment to shift to full assembly from completely knocked down (CKD) units.

All SKD importers are required to put up a bond representing the discount they obtained by bringing in the SKD units at CKD rates of 3 percent to 10 percent instead of the 30-percent duty slapped on completely built up units.

SKDs are actually CBUs minus the tires and batteries.

Roxas explained that the government would get the bond if the SKD importer does not go to CKD assembly within 18 months after starting importation. He said it would be more prudent for the SKD importer to re-export the unsold SKD units to reduce penalties.

The BOI earlier agreed to institute cancellation proceedings of the SKD authority and enforce payment of the difference in taxes and duties between the CBU and SKD units.

This was among the policies adopted by the DTI as part of its new thrust to finally discontinue the granting of SKD import licenses.

This policy shuts the door on the application of Ford Motor Co. Philippines Inc. and Auto Prominence Corp. to bring in 2,000 Escape units and 1,570 units of Volkswagen Gol and Parati in SKD format.

The BOI is currently reviewing the Motor Vehicle Development Program (MVDP) in an effort to reinvigorate the industry ahead of the Asean Free Trade Area in 2003.

PLDT open to other investors in Smart

By Doris C. Dumlao

JAPAN'S leading cellular operator NTT DoCoMo Inc. was just one of many companies that have expressed interest to invest in Smart Communications Inc., the biggest cellular phone subsidiary of telecommunications giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

"We advise that PLDT was approached from time to time by a number of parties who have expressed interest in investing in its cellular business," PLDT said in a statement filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange.

PLDT said it was inevitable that it would discuss a possible partnership with NTT in Smart since they already have an existing business partnership through its equity stake in PLDT.

PLDT made a statement in reaction to an Inquirer story published Monday that said that the telecommunications giant was wooing the subsidiary of former state telecom monopoly Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp. (NTT) to invest in unlisted Smart, a cash cow of the PLDT group.

"We advise that PLDT has an existing relationship with the NTT group which owns 15 percent of PLDT's outstanding common shares. As a result of this, PLDT continues to have regular discussions with the NTT group on a wide range of commercial and business issues," PLDT said.

Sources said NTT DoCoMo was keen on acquiring a stake in Smart, although under the Philippine Constitution, foreign groups are not allowed to end up with more than 40 percent control of any utility firm.

PLDT also told the PSE that the planned public listing of Smart would be done within the framework of existing laws.

"Regarding the plans for the public offering of Smart's shares, the same would be pursued in accordance with the requirements of the Public Telecommunications Policy Act of the Philippines (Republic Act 7925) and its implementing rules and regulations," PLDT said.

Sources said PLDT would pursue the IPO after the entry of NTT DoCoMo into Smart, which had a book value of at least P37.9 billion.

Analysts said a tie-up between Smart and NTT DoCoMo would enhance future prospects for the PLDT group.

NTT DoCoMo, a leader in wireless technology, is Japan's largest company by market capitalization.

It has been the best performer among telecom stocks worldwide since the beginning of the year, buoyed by the phenomenal growth in its i-mode mobile Internet service, where more than 23 million users surf the Web on credit card-sized screens.

NTT DoCoMo is also set to offer 3G services, which gives faster Internet access and features such as videoconferencing.

PLDT, on the other hand, relies heavily on its wireless units, especially Smart for its revenues. Combined with Piltel, the group now boasts of a subscriber base of 4.2 million of which 83 percent belongs to Smart

"This is, on the long term, very positive for Smart and PLDT. DoCoMo is a leading cellular operator and its i-mode service is touted as a possible new platform for cellular use globally. Having such a formidable partner is a major boost," PCCI Securities Brokers Corp. head of research Gonzalo Bongolan said.

However, Bongolan said the market was still awaiting further developments because of technological issues.

LPG firm puts up production plant

By Ronnel W. Domingo

FERROTECH Steel Corp., the country's leading manufacturer of LPG cylinders, would soon complete its P155-million expansion program with the operation of its new production facilities in Valenzuela and Cebu.

Ferrotech said in a statement the facility in Valenzuela included additional production lines that would double the firm's production capacity from 1,200 to 2,400 cylinders per day.

The new manufacturing plant included machinery for the repair and maintenance of old LPG cylinders.

Ferrotech said the opening of the new facility, slated in July, would reduce the waiting time for the repair of LPG cylinders from one month to just a few days.

After Valenzuela, Ferrotech plans to start construction of a similar facility in Cebu worth P35 million within the year. It is targeted for completion by the middle of next year.

Ferrotech supplies cylinders to major LPG manufacturers such as Petron Corp. (Gasul), Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. (Shellane), Caltex Philippines Inc. (Starflame) and TotalFinaElf Philippines (Totalgaz).

The firm said its expansion program was an answer to the Department of Energy's call for providing safe and reliable LPG cylinders to consumers.

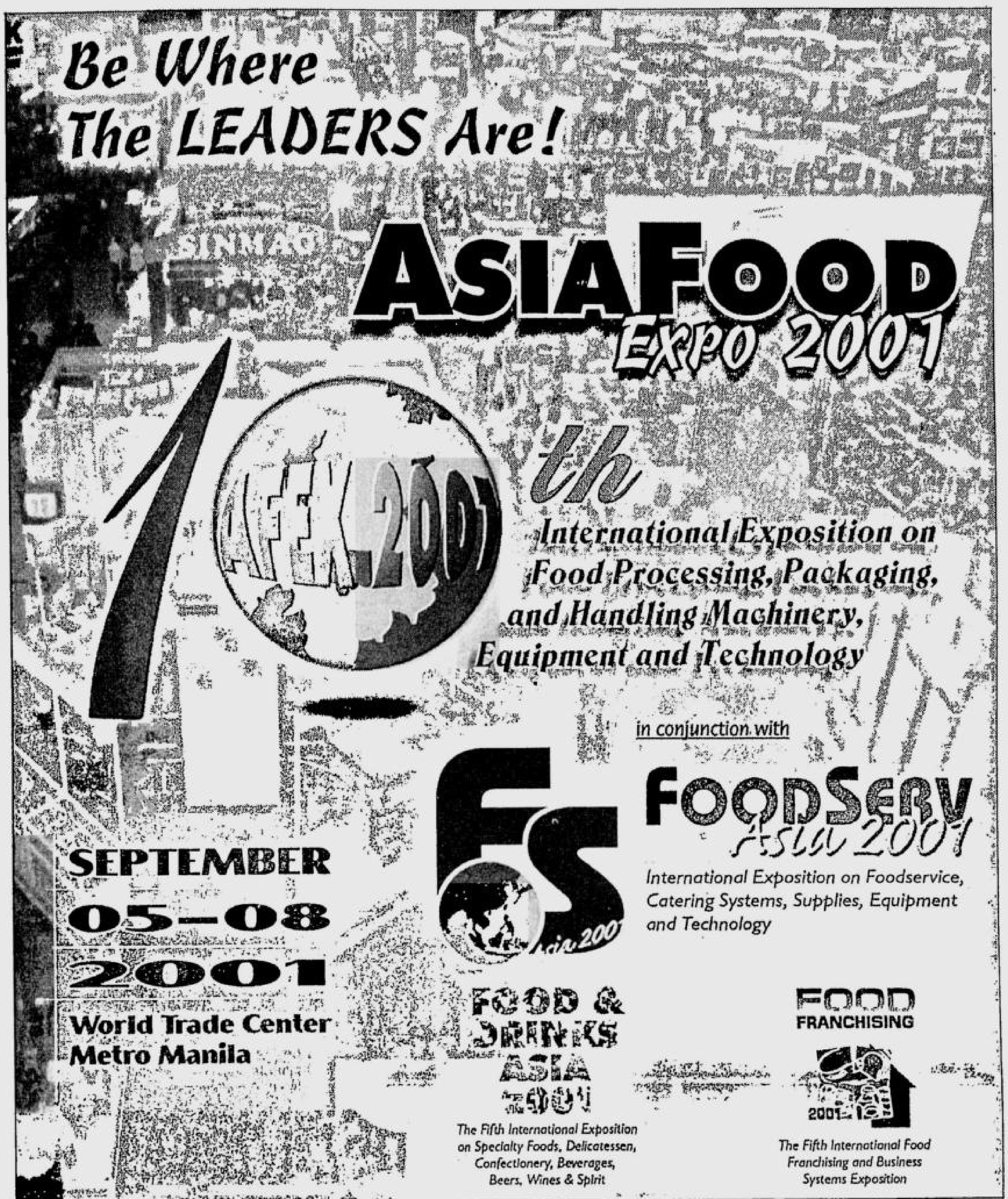
LPG is commonly used for cooking among most households and small commercial enterprises.

Defective or substandard cylinders rank high among the causes of destructive fires, particularly in crowded residential areas.

Marketing LPG in substandard cylinders was also one of the most common violations penalized by an LPG task force set up by the energy department.

In an earlier interview, a DOE official said dialogues between Secretary Jose Isidro N. Camacho and violators are pushing through within the week.

Camacho said last week he had summoned erring LPG dealers "on top of the list" to solicit their cooperation in using cylinders that meet government safety standards.



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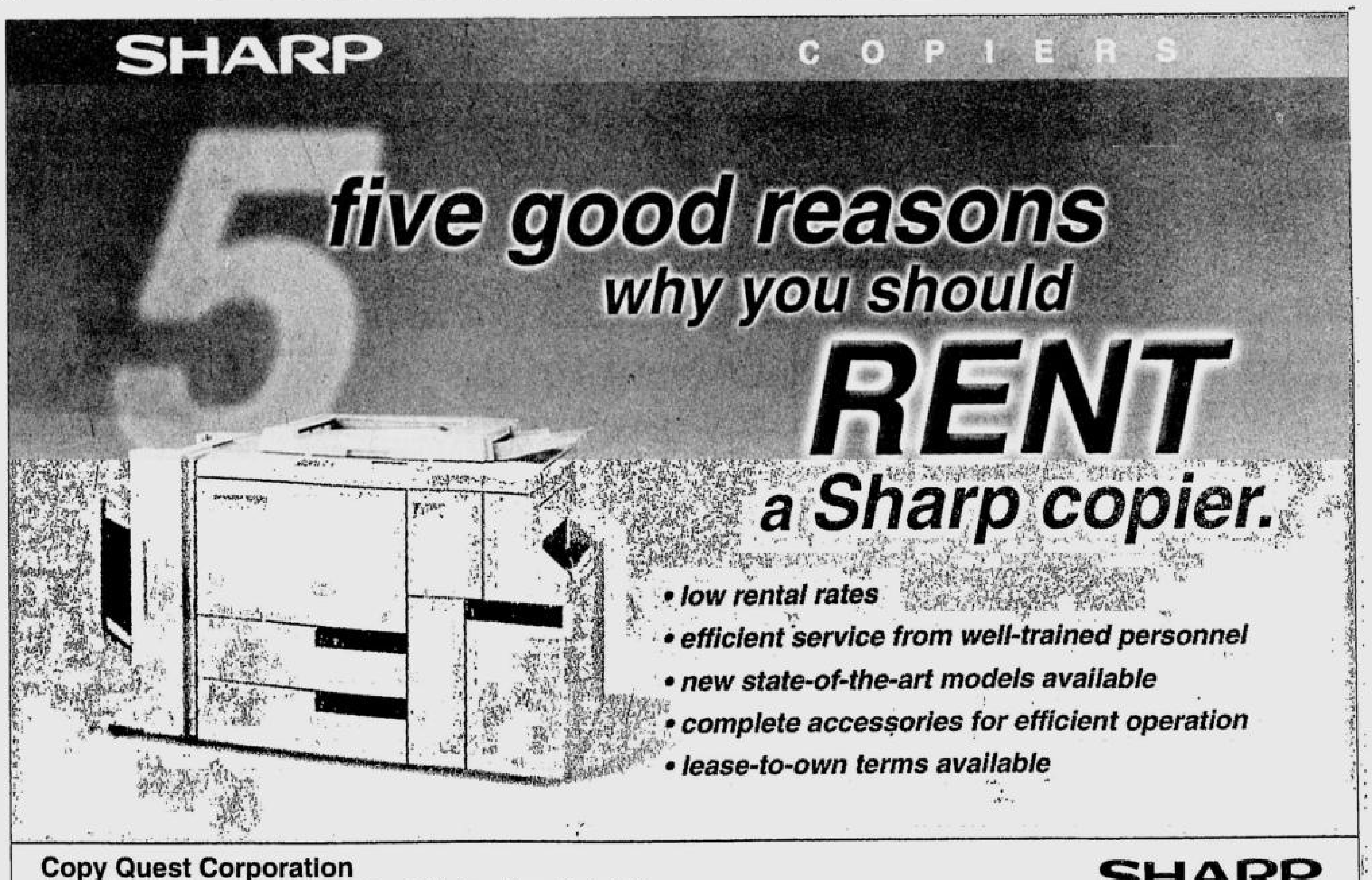

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RIPPLES FROM US SLUMP

Electronics slump batters Asian economies

SINGAPORE—Asia churns out most of the world' semiconductors, and many of the region's economies rely heavily on exporting them to the United States—the world's biggest consumer of electronics.

Yet, as Americans rein in their technology spending, the armies of Asian semiconductor workers are dwindling.

The slack demand for microchips is battering the economies of South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Layoffs are rampant, with Asian, US and European companies letting staff go.

Malaysia's human resources minister said recently that 1,000 to 2,000 people were losing manufacturing jobs every week in that nation.

And even if the United States' economy were to suddenly pick up, Asia's export-dependent countries could continue to suffer.

Mountains of electronics inventory have piled up in warehouses and on retailers' shelves, and the stored goods may well be outdated when the sector eventually recovers.

Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co., the world's largest contract chipmaker, posted lower-than-expected profits for the first three months of this year, and warned that things could get worse in the second quarter.

"Some people claim to see light at the end of the tunnel" for the global semiconductor market, said David Cohen, a Singapore-based analyst with Standard & Poor's MMS International. "But it's still too much of a stretch to see a turnaround."

Governments across Asia are predicting lower economic growth rates this year as a result.

In Taiwan, the electronics industry contracted 6.35 percent during the first two months of this year—the biggest decline since the 1974 oil crisis.

The United States is the biggest trading partner of Asian nations including Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, South Korea and the Philippines. Electronics make up 59 percent of Malaysia's total exports, 60 percent of Singapore's and 69 percent of the Philippines, according to those countries' governments.

China and India also make semiconductors, but the Asian Development Bank believes the diversity of their economies should enable them to weather the electronics slowdown. Chinese and Indian consumers may even help the Asian electronics industry compensate for slack US demand, analysts say.

Graham Hayward, executive director of the Singapore International Chamber of Commerce, called the ADB view "very optimistic."

One of the chamber's members, a multinational company, has lost more than 80 percent of its orders from the United States in recent months, Hayward said, adding that all of the semiconductor companies in Southeast Asia are struggling.

Gartner Inc., a US-based high-tech research and consulting firm, says semiconductor companies in Asia are shipping 15 percent to 30 percent fewer goods now than in previous quarters.

"The bottom has probably not been reached, certainly not in all markets," said Tan Kay Yang, an analyst with Gartner. "Personnel layoffs and forced vacations, production shutdowns and idling, and new construction stoppage still occur on a weekly basis."

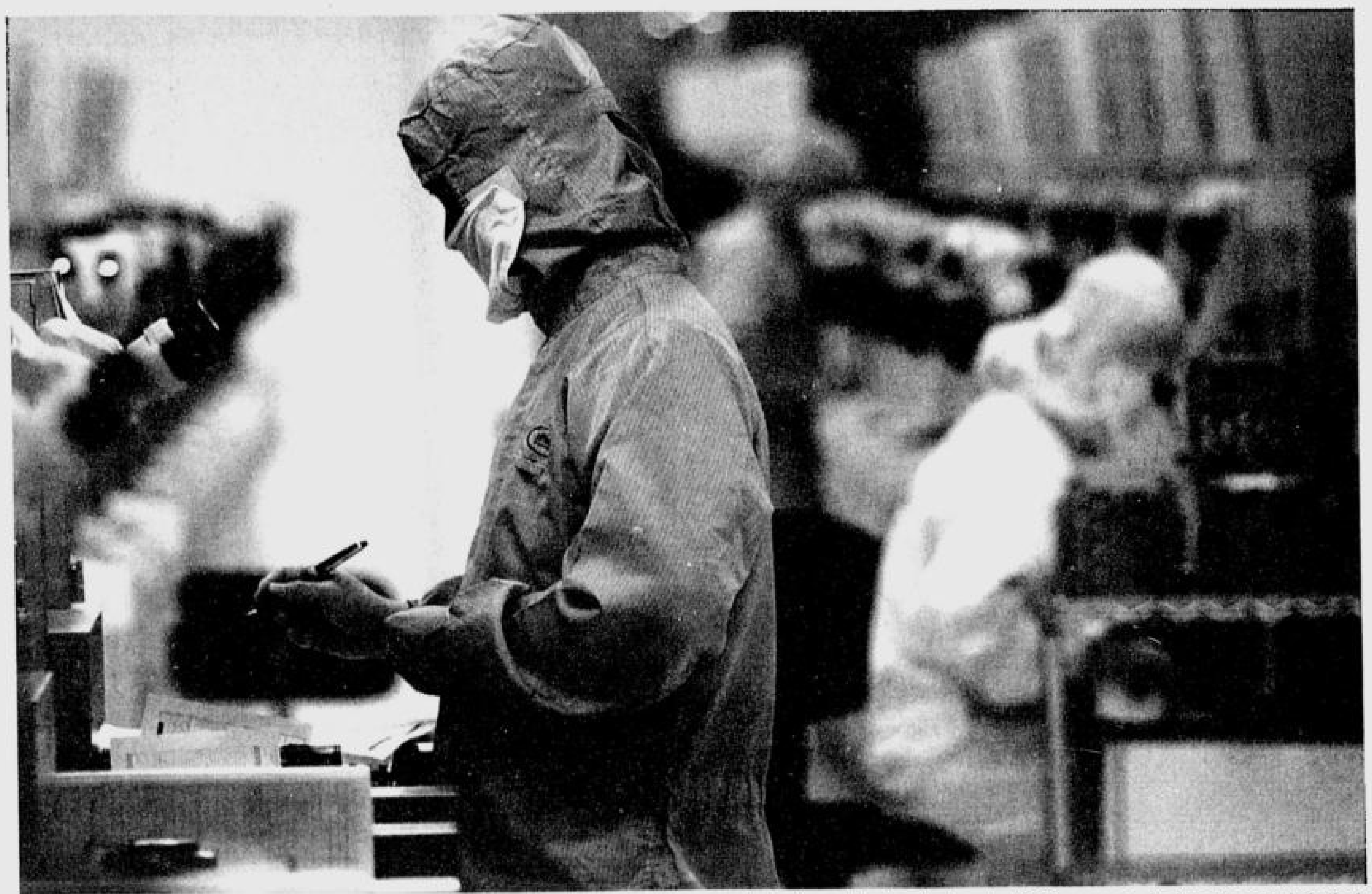
Gartner forecasts the global industry will end 2001 with $188 billion in revenue—a 16.7-percent decline from 2000, when the industry posted a record $226 billion in revenue. Gartner predicts the industry will begin to recover in four to six months—and is forecasting 2002 revenue at $213 billion, a 13.2-percent hike from 2001.

Most companies and analysts agree that the industry will recover and despite the pain we are nowhere near a regional financial meltdown. Many companies are taking advantage of the downturn to expand.

Taiwan's United Microelectronics Corp. and Germany's Infineon Technologies AG are building a $3.6-billion plant in Singapore to manufacture silicon wafers—the flat, round sheets used to make chips.

The Singapore plant will manufacture state-of-the-art 30-centimeter wafers instead of the more standard 20-centimeter size.

"Investing in the downturn is not so bad," said Loh Kin Wah, president of Infineon's Asia-Pacific operations He said the 12-inch (30-centimeter) wafers come just in time for the industry's next upswing. "They're the next level of technology." *AP*



WORKERS bend to their task inspecting silicon wafers used to make microchips at the Infineon Technologies plant in Singapore. As Americans rein in their spending, leaving computers and other chip-powered appliances to gather dust on store shelves, semiconductor companies are cutting costs, and the armies manning Asia's microchip assembly lines are dwindling. AP

S. Korea economy returns to growth in Q1

SEOUL—South Korea's economy returned to growth in the first quarter after contracting in the final quarter of 2000 as the electronics sector, a main engine of exports, weathered a global economic slump.

Gross domestic product rose a provisional 0.3 percent quarter-on-quarter in the first three months, the central Bank of Korea said Tuesday.

The rise followed a 0.4-percent decline in the fourth quarter of 2000, the first drop since the second quarter of 1998, the year that bore the brunt of the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis.

The latest reading topped the 0.1-percent average forecast by 10 research houses polled by Reuters on Monday.

The BOK said in a statement that exports, led by chips and telecom parts, rose 8.4 percent year-on-year in the first three months of the year, while a recovery in consumer and business spending was still nascent.

"Chances that the economic slowdown would be deeper and sharper in coming months are low," Chung Jung-ho, director general of the bank's economic statistics department, told a news conference.

"Consumption, spurred by an upturn in the local equity market, is expected to provide some buffer to exports that have fallen for three consecutive months," Chung said.

The information and technology business advanced 17.7 percent year-on-year, representing 16.7 percent of total GDP for first quarter, the BOK said.

Private consumption posted a tiny 0.9-percent rise in the first quarter as expanded spending on dining out, education and healthcare was largely eclipsed by a drop in spending on autos, groceries and furniture, it said.

Fixed corporate investments declined 3.7 percent year-on-year as investments in facilities and equipment showed a sharp decline of 7.9 percent, while construction investments rose 1.4 percent.

Year-on-year GDP growth was 3.7 percent in the first quarter, down from a rise of 12.6 percent in the same quarter of 2000.

Analysts polled by Reuters said doubts over a quick rebound in the global electronics sector led many to believe a recovery in exports was only likely in late third quarter at the earliest.

Exports in April fell 9.3 percent year-on-year to $12.26 billion, their sharpest fall in 26 months.

The central bank has forecast GDP growth this year of 5.3 percent, after an estimated 8.8 percent in 2000 and a post-crisis surge of 10.9 percent in 1999. *Reuters*

Software industry group places cost of piracy at $11.8B in 2000

WASHINGTON—The software industry's watchdog arm said Monday piracy of computer programs around the world cost them $11.8 billion in 2000, with more than one of every three business software applications unauthorized.

The Business Software Alliance said a study conducted by an independent research group, International Planning and Research Corp., found that Vietnam was the worst offender, with 97 percent of all software pirated in 2000—down only a fraction from 98 percent a year earlier.

Other countries where software piracy was rampant, according to the study, included China (94 percent), Indonesia (89 percent), Ukraine and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (89 percent), Russia (88 percent), Lebanon (83 percent), Bolivia (81 percent), Qatar (81 percent) and Bahrain (80 percent).

The 2000 world piracy remained almost constant with the 1999 rate, with a one percentage point increase to 37 percent.

The dollar losses due to piracy declined 3.5 percent from 1999 from to just under $11.8 billion.

North America, the Asia-Pacific region and Western Europe account for 87 percent of revenue losses, the group said.

"Although the piracy rates in several regions and countries have decreased, software piracy continues to rob the global marketplace of hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions in wages and tax revenues," said Robert Holleyman, president and chief executive of the alliance. *AFP*

China to keep yuan stable for 5 years

BEIJING—China will keep the exchange rate of its yuan currency stable for the next five years, the Economic Daily said in a front-page editorial on Tuesday.

China would protect the value of the yuan and maintain "basic stability" of the exchange rate from 2000 to 2005, the official newspaper said.

It praised the government for staving off a devaluation of the currency during the 1997 Asian economic crisis.

"In the midst of the depression of the Asian financial crisis, only China maintained stability in the value of its currency," it said.

China's state development plan for the next five years makes a similar pledge. But the central bank said last week that slowing exports and a weak Japanese yen could put pressure on the yuan.

Analysts say a devaluation is unlikely as long as China's balance of payments remains healthy.

Dai Genyou, director of the central bank's monetary policy department, said in an interview carried by an official newspaper on Monday that China would maintain stability the yuan despite the impact of a slowing global economy. *Reuters*

IMF wants tougher Japanese moves

TOKYO—The Bank of Japan should move more aggressively to tackle deflation by means of quantitative monetary easing, a senior International Monetary Fund director said Tuesday.

"With deflation continuing in Japan, it is important for the BOJ to commit itself aggressively to quantitative easing," said Charles Collyns, senior advisor to the IMF's Asia Pacific department.

Collyns said the IMF welcomed the Japanese central bank's new monetary policy framework in March, but pointed out that "deflationary forces remain entrenched."

"Now is the time to move ahead to make use of this framework more aggressively," Collyns said.

On March 19, the BOJ said it was shifting its target for money-market operations from the overnight call rate—which governs inter-bank borrowing among commercial banks—to its current account for bank deposits.

It said it would increase the level of reserves it required in the account to five trillion yen ($41 billion) from $4 trillion, and as a result expected the call rate "to stay close to zero percent under normal circumstances."

The move was in effect a reversion to the zero interest rate policy the central bank abandoned last August which was loudly criticized from within the ranks of the government and the ruling Liberal Democratic Party as premature. *AFP*

O'Neill thinks US has averted a recession

WASHINGTON—US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill said Monday he believed the United States had averted a recession, with the economy now on the upswing again.

"I think the correction process is well under way," O'Neill said on Fox television, forecasting a return to a "respectable rate of real growth" by the end of the year.

Asked whether this meant the United States has avoided a recession, he said: "I do."

O'Neill said US gross domestic product growth is currently "bouncing around" between 0.5 percent and 2 percent.

US first-quarter GDP was up 2 percent in the first estimate, but most economists expected that to be revised downward significantly when the Commerce Department releases its revised estimate on Friday.

Asked about the impact of the Federal Reserve's recent interest rate cuts, O'Neill said: "I think monetary policy is in wonderfully good hands." He did not elaborate. *AFP*

A big hair day

Procter & Gamble Co. plans to complement its hair-care line with its purchase of Clairol for $4.95 billion. P&G already serves customers with shampoo, conditioner and styling products.

Procter & Gamble Inc.

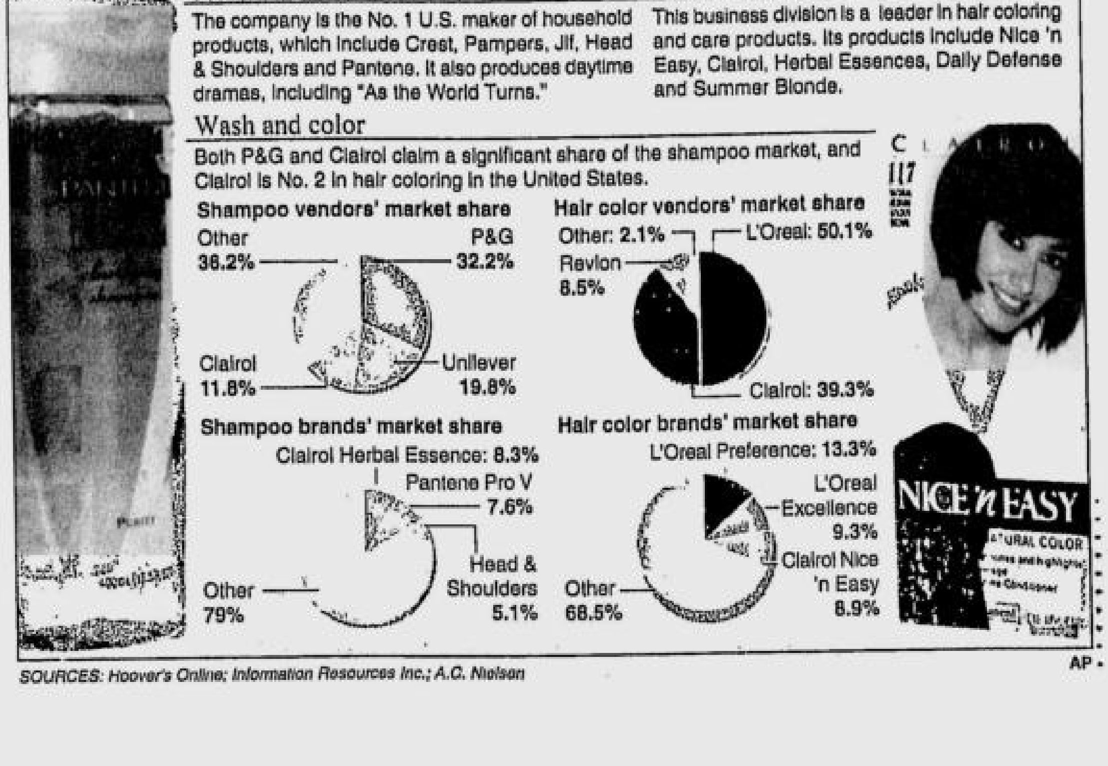
The company is the No. 1 U.S. maker of household products, which include Crest, Pampers, Jif, Head & Shoulders and Pantene. It also produces daytime dramas, including "As the World Turns."

Clairol (A Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. division)

This business division is a leader in hair coloring and care products. Its products include Nice 'n Easy, Clairol, Herbal Essences, Daily Defense and Summer Blonde.

Wash and color

Both P&G and Clairol claim a significant share of the shampoo market, and Clairol is No. 2 in hair coloring in the United States.



SOURCES: Hoover's Online; Information Resources Inc.; A.C. Nielsen

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HYDRAULIC EXCAVATORS - *CATERPILLAR EL300B; *CATERPILLAR EL300; *CATERPILLAR 235B, *SAMSUNG (1993) MX6 LCM

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TRUCK MOUNTED BACKHOE - ISUZU B240SLC

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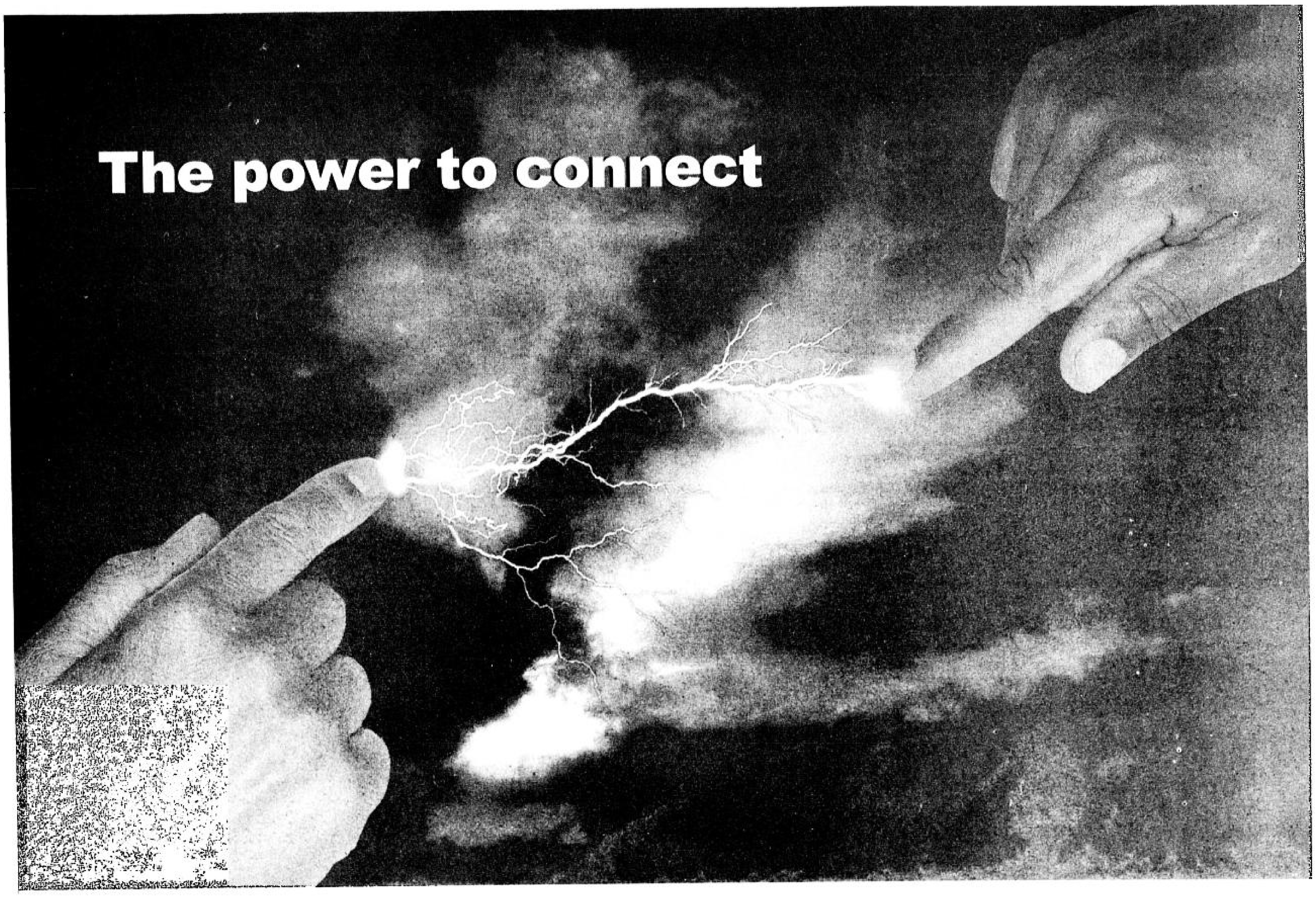

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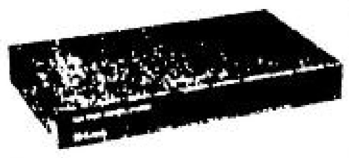

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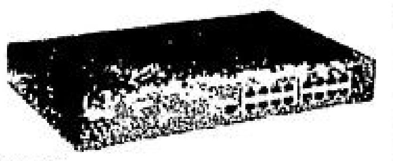

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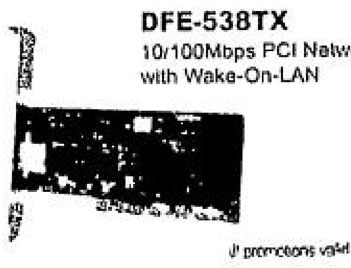

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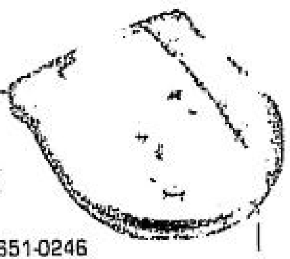

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SURPRISING SPURT

Japanese economy grows

TOKYO—Japan's economy put on a surprising spurt at the end of the first quarter, with the all-industries index of business activity climbing 0.4 percent in March from the month before, the government said on Tuesday.

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) said the closely watched index was powered by a 0.8-percent leap in the tertiary sector and by a 0.2-percent rise in construction.

The figures will reinforce expectations of fairly solid growth in January-March gross domestic product (GDP) when figures are released next month because the all-industries index is a rough proxy of GDP.

For the quarter the index rose 0.4 percent—the second consecutive quarterly gain—thanks to a 1.9-percent surge in the tertiary sector, which comprises services, distribution and utilities.

But a number of economists, who had expected both the all-industries and the tertiary indices to drop by around one percent in March, remained skeptical about the capacity of the economy to keep growing in the face of weakening global demand.

With exports tumbling because of falling sales in the United States and other key overseas markets, the industrial production component of the all-industries index fell 2.1 percent in March.

"We know that manufacturing sector output is going to continue to decline. There's quite a large need for inventory adjustment to continue there," said Matthew Poggi of Lehman brothers in Tokyo.

Poggi told Reuters Television that he also expected the construction sector to weaken because of falling orders.

"And with the jobs market beginning to deteriorate somewhat, household incomes are falling and that could reduce the activity we're seeing in the service sector, particularly communications," Poggi added.

Looking ahead, a METI official said he too was worried that business services will feel the brunt of waning corporate activity.

The retail sector is another concern, with METI watching for any backlash to a first-quarter spending spree on household goods to beat the introduction of a law in April that makes consumers responsible for the recycling of household appliances.

Communications and transport, up 6.2 percent, led the rise in the tertiary sector, which accounts for 59.5 percent of the overall index, according to METI.

Electricity and gas production as well as information services and engineering also notched up solid gains in March, the ministry said.

The figures, though strong, look backward and so had little impact on financial markets.

The benchmark Nikkei Tokyo stock market average was up 0.6 percent in early trading while the yen retained a firm tone around 122.70 per dollar, underpinned by capital inflows on hopes that new Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi will press ahead with economic reforms.

Reuters

IMF wants tougher BoJ moves on deflation

TOKYO—The Bank of Japan should move more aggressively to tackle deflation by means of quantitative monetary easing, a senior International Monetary Fund director said Tuesday.

"With deflation continuing in Japan, it is important for the BoJ to commit itself aggressively to quantitative easing," said Charles Collyns, senior advisor to the IMF's Asia Pacific department.

Collyns said the IMF welcomed the Japanese central bank's new monetary policy framework in March, but pointed out that "deflationary forces remain entrenched."

"Now is the time to move ahead to make use of this framework more aggressively," Collyns said.

On March 19, the BoJ said it was shifting its target for money-market operations from the overnight call rate—which governs inter-bank borrowing among commercial banks—to its current account for bank deposits.

It said it would increase the level of reserves it required in the account to five trillion yen ($41 billion) from $4 trillion, and as a result expected the call rate "to stay close to zero percent under normal circumstances."

The move was in effect a reversion to the zero interest rate policy the central bank abandoned last August which was loudly criticized from within the ranks of the government and the ruling Liberal Democratic Party as premature.

Collyns was speaking at the end of the IMF's two-week mission to Tokyo for an annual round of macro-economic discussions with the finance ministry and central bankers, the so-called Article IV Consultation.

AFP

Confidence in HK up in May

HONG KONG—Public confidence in Hong Kong's economic outlook and job prospects improved significantly in May, the Hong Kong Policy Research Institute said in its latest survey.

Confidence in the territory's economic prospects increased by 15.1 percent to 75.5 points, compared to the previous month, while the index on "improvement on unemployment" rose 15.2 percent to 68 points, the institute said in a statement.

The results contrasted with relative gloom over prospects for the Hong Kong economy in previous months which has coincided with a deterioration in the jobless rate to 4.6 percent, a sharp slowdown in total export growth and sluggish consumer demand.

The local economy is expected to pick up in the second half of this year if the sputtering US economy revives, some economists say. The impact of five successive interest rate cuts is also likely to filter into the system later in the year.

Confidence in the stock market rebounded by 42 percent to 91 points, while that of the interest rate sensitive property market rose by 23 percent to 76 points.

Sentiment toward prospects for mainland China's economy also improved, by 7.5 percent to 116 points, while confidence in China-Hong Kong economic relations increased by 9.9 percent to 121 points.

Bucking the trend were the index for satisfaction with quality of life and change of quality of life that fell by 2 and 3.5 percent, respectively.

Reuters

Bridgestone stops tire supply to Ford

TOKYO—Bridgestone/Firestone will no longer sell tires to Ford Motor Co. because the automaker tried to blame accidents under federal investigation on the tires, the president of Bridgestone Corp. said Tuesday.

The decision will pit Bridgestone against Ford in the automaker's proposed recall of an additional 10 million Firestone tires—a move Bridgestone opposes, president Shigeo Watanabe told reporters at company headquarters in Tokyo.

Last summer, Bridgestone/Firestone—the US subsidiary of Bridgestone Corp.—recalled 6.5 million Firestone tires. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is investigating the tires in more than 6,000 reported accidents including blowouts and tread separations. Most of the tires were on Ford Explorer sport utility vehicles.

Bridgestone's assertion was that some combination of the tires and vehicles may be the cause of the reported accidents, said Watanabe, who took office after his predecessor resigned for the tire recalls.

On Monday, Bridgestone/Firestone announced it will no longer sell tires to Ford in North and South America, ending a nearly century-old relationship that had gone sour over last summer's recall.

Watanabe said he gave John Lampe, Bridgestone/Firestone chief executive, several options in dealing with Ford, and "the worst possible scenario" was ending the relationship. Ford, however, consistently refused to change its view that the tires were to blame, he said.

AP

PCCW plans shift in inquiry services

HONG KONG—Pacific Century Cyberworks (PCCW) is planning to shift directory inquiry services to Guangzhou on a trial basis, but the move will not result in any layoffs, a company spokeswoman said Tuesday.

"We have started a trial run to set up an inquiry center in Guangzhou and if that is a success, we will move the operation to Guangzhou," PCCW spokeswoman Joan Wagner told AFP.

The call center in the southern Chinese city will initially employ 250 people, providing services mainly in the local dialect, Cantonese, she said.

"There will be no layoffs" among PCCW-HKT's current call center staff in Hong Kong of some 2,000 people, Wagner said, although some could be "redeployed."

The plan to partially shift directory inquiry services to Guangzhou was mentioned at a meeting Monday between PCCW chairman Richard Li and staff representatives.

Cheng Chun-man, chairman of the Hong Kong Communication Employees' Association, expressed concern over the plan following the meeting.

"What we fear is that the relocation and lack of a further guarantee is just the start of a series of cost-cutting moves and forced redundancies," Cheng told reporters.

"(Li) said he could not offer any guarantee at this stage but promised American-style mass layoffs were not likely," he added.

The PCCW chairman said cost-control measures would focus on increasing efficiency and while he could not rule out job cuts, layoffs would be a last resort.

Li, the younger son of tycoon Li Ka-shing, was hailed as a business genius when he exploited last year's Internet frenzy and PCCW's inflated share price to carry out a largely paper-based takeover of Hong Kong Telecom, the territory's former monopoly telephone network operator.

AFP

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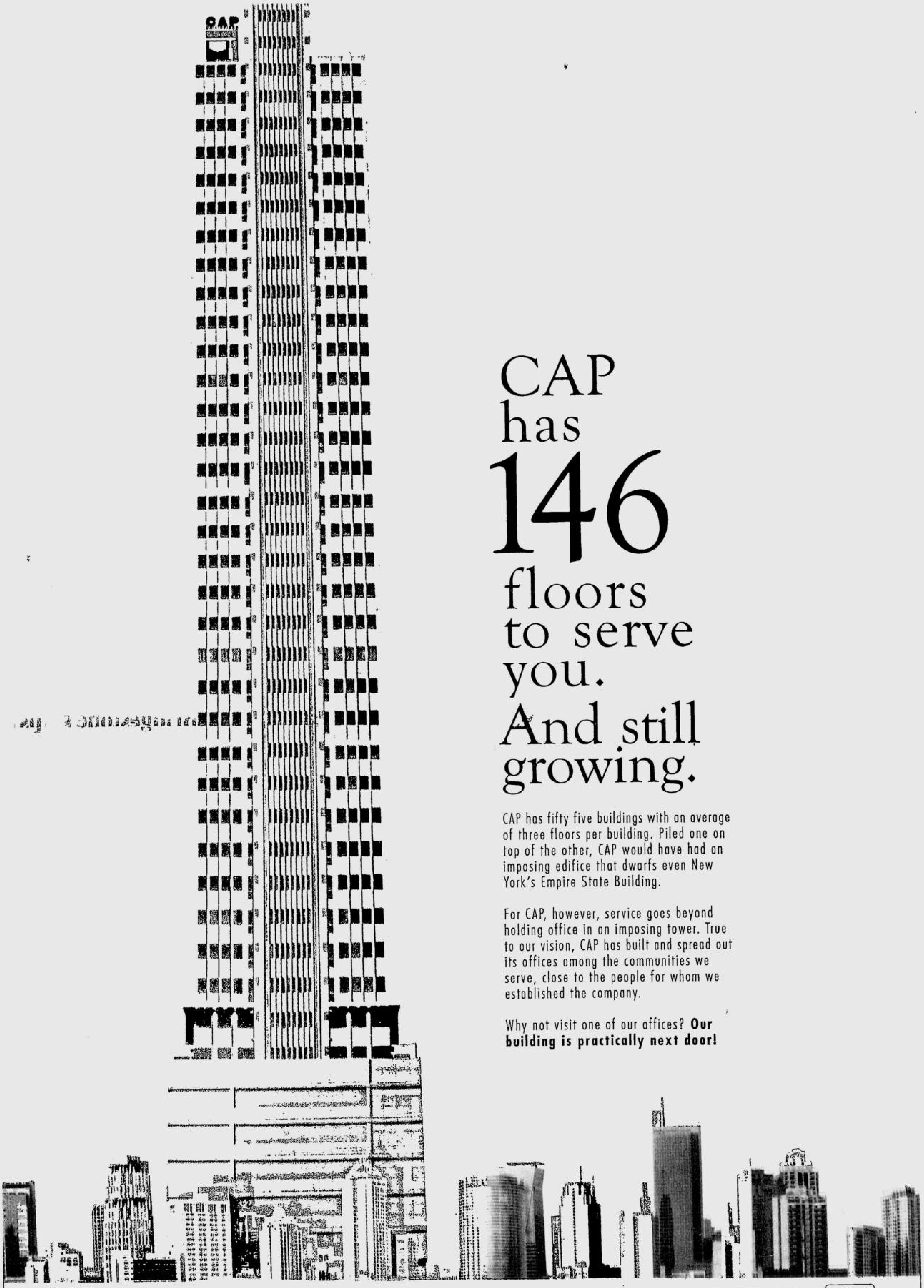

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QUEZON CITY

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REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

LOT

QUEZON CITY

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SFDM QC 519sqm w/imp. 815-0298 CP 0919-4037225

Sta. Mesa Hts 0917-7541545

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755m² RUSH • T634-8160

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M. Ignacia D.B.O 634-8160

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Imleda Ave Cainta 464sqm Comm'l 8150298/6558371

Taytay 10790sqm Comm'l 815-0298 CP 0919-4037225

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BOLINAO, PANG. HIGHWAY 43,612sqm. 8344714/0755542188

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Malinta Bula 7049m² VLot Along Hiway Tel 928-1469

Tag Over Res 7,712@5T/m² 842-1571 • 0919-2061384

Pansol Lag P4500/sqm Hot Spring 8421571 0919-2061384

Tag Overlooking P4500/TH 842-1571 • 0919-2061384

Tagaytay No Down 10T/mo 842-1571 0919-2061384

SUBIC 96,828m²
4 subd. 047-9134120 Jhun

Tagaytay Royale w/Share 447m² Cor Lot 6337601-03

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Tanza Cavite L15333m² Comml Lot 1T/m² 928-1469

OTHER AREAS

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EDSA VACANT LOT 1650m² 30T/m² • 928-3267

CONDO/TWNHSE/APT

MAKATI

3Storey T'house at Makati 4205-B Madras, Palanan LA66 FA298 P7.5M still neg. PLEASE CALL 728-9856

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MANDALUYONG

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PASIG

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Nr Ultra & Valle Verde 3BR Pkg Nice 3M 681-2457

PARC Chateau 2BR FF 1PS P12.5M • 6337601-03

Pioneer Hilands 3BR Pkg 114m² East VW 681-2457

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w/income RUSH 634-8160

Tektite East 220sqm 2 Parking Pgr 1481788421

THE PARC ROYALE Raquel Pager 1481788421

Renaissance 2000 3Brms P10M • Pager 1481788421

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CONDO/TWNHSE/APT

PASIG

The Prestige Tower Raquel • Pager 1481788421

QUEZON CITY

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Woodside NMla 915-5177

SAN JUAN

AIC Gold Tower 2BR w/den FA159m • 928-1469

Francis Court San Juan LA200 Flr269 • 928-2497

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MANILA

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SnMiguel F"Goodah 7356427

MARIKINA

nr Ateneo 2BR 1TB grge Montevista P8,500 6819583

HOUSE

ALABANG

Ayala Alabang For Rent 842-1571 • 0919-2061384

MAKATI

SANLO 3BR 5268048/49

PASIG

Kawilihan Vill 1BR 50m² Secured P10T/mo 671-4421

QUEZON CITY

NR UP DILIMAN 5243126

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

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CTL8 1br Sala P10T 9299835

ECOLOGY VILL 5268048/49

Legaspi Village BNew 2BR Semi Furn P70/m 671-4421

Mkl. Asia Tower 1-2-3BR 751-8342 • 6337601-03

MANDALUYONG

Cityland Shaw Studio Furn 815-0298 CP 0919-4037225

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AIC Condo Ortigas 2BR P30T/mo Call • 671-4421

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QUEZON CITY

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Interested applicant may apply in person together with their resumé, 2x2 picture and transcript of records at:

Human Resources Department
7781 Saint Paul Street, San Antonio Village, Makati City
Telephone Nos. 899-2422, 899-2440 to 41

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

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Interested applicants may see the SVP not later than May 28, 2001

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late MAXIMINO C. ANDAL JR. has been extra-judicially settled by his heirs on Jan. 6, 2001 under Doc.#909; Page#192; Book#11; Series of 2001 before Notary Public Atty. Douglas Santiago PDI-May 23, 30 & June 6, 2001

Notice is hereby given that the estate of Spouses SIMEON CASTOR & JULIA MACAHIA is extrajudicially settled as per Doc. No 1311; Page No. 23; Book No. VIII; Series of 2001 by Notary Publis Atty. Rustico M. Zapata, Jr of Quezon City PDI-May 16, 23 & 30 , 2001

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late Rafaela A. Castro has been extrajudicially settled by her heirs as per Doc#345; Page#70, Book #41; Series of 2001 before Notary Public Lope M. Velasco.

(PDI-May 9, 16 & 23, 2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Lost Passport No.BB953055 under the name of Pascual Cambi Tabisora, Jr.

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OBITUARIES

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DEADLINE
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Monday to Sunday
12:00 noon
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SISTER LEONOR SENO (Loreto), ICM

July 1, 1924 - May 21, 2001

Her remains lie in state in the Queen of Peace Convent Chapel at 61 Banawe Street, Quezon City.

The Sisters of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (ICM) and her bereaved family, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Interment will be on Thursday, May 24, 2001, at the La Loma Catholic Cemetery after the 9:30 a.m. Mass at the Queen of Peace Convent Chapel.

In Loving Memory

On the Tenth Death Anniversary of

GORGONIA MEDINA VITUG

of Arayat, Pampanga and Quezon City
who joined our Creator on May 24, 1991

Masses will be offered at the follownig churches on May 24, 2001:

St. Catherine Parish Church, Arayat, Pampanga .... 6:30 AM
Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon Avenue, QC .... 12:15 PM
Most Holy Redeemer Parish, Brixton Hill, QC .... 6:30 PM

LORI G. ESTRADA

Peacefully joined our Creator on May 18, 2001
at the age of 74.

His beloved children **Charles** and **Esperanza**, his grandchildren, his sister **Amy Losey**, **Godilla**, his sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, nephews and nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at 24 Luciano St., Project 4, Quezon City.

His mortal remains will be cremated to rejoin Mother Earth.

"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again."

2 Corinthians 5:4-5

MARK HARRIS F. BACALLA

Peacefully joined his Creator on May 3, 2001
at the age of 23.

His loving mother **Ofelia**, brother **Mar-Antonio**, sister **Mara Ophelia**, relatives and friends request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Chapel Q of the Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe, Makati City. Daily masses will be offered at 7:30 p.m. every evening.

Interment will be on Saturday, May 26, 2001, 10:00 a.m. at Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

ENGR. EDILBERTO G. VERGARA

Peacefully joined our Lord on May 20, 2001 at the age of 69.

His loving wife **CORA**; dearest children **DITDIT** and **ROY CARIÑO**, **MAYANNE** and **LES BIRD**, **MARI-ROSE** and **TJ JOSON**, **JV** and **COCO (LEDESMA) ANGIE** and **TINY PANGANIBAN** and **EDWARD** and **BING (BANTAY)**; beloved grandchildren **MICA, MICO, MIA, MIO, CATHERINE, VICTORIA, TON, ENZO, JESICCA, JEN-JEN, MATTHEW, TRIXIE, KARIZZA** and **NICO**; brothers, sisters and in-laws **VIC JR.** and **MARY**, **FRED** and **LUDY**, **CHITO** and **ZONY**, **TITA** and **BENNY**, **BING** and **NIDA**, **MANNY** and **MAYETTE**, **CORA** and **TONY**; and other relatives as well as friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Sta. Rita De Cascia Church, Philam Life Homes, Quezon City. Daily Masses will be offered at 8:00 PM.

Interment will be on Sunday, May 27, 2001 at the Vergara Mausoleum, Cabanatuan City Cemetery, Nueva Ecija.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

CLASSIFIEDS

BENGUET CORPORATION
One Corporate Plaza
845 Arnaiz Ave., 1223 Makati City

NOTICE OF POSTPONEMENT

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of Benguet Corporation scheduled on **May 29, 2001** is postponed to a later date after **June 30, 2001.**

April 30, 2001, Makati City, Philippines

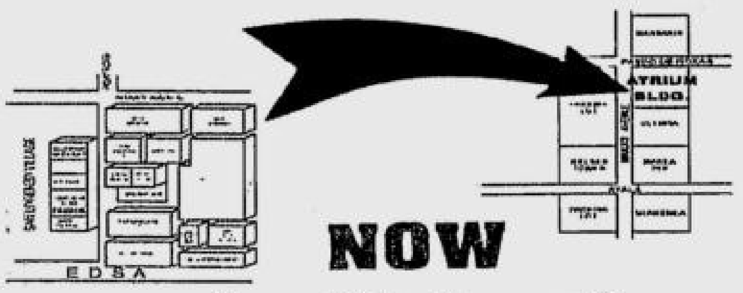
By authority of the Board of Directors

(Sgd.) **HERMOGENE H. REAL**
Corporate Secretary

(PDI – May 23, 2001)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Makati Branch



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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Labor and Employment
NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS COMMISSION
Quezon City

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC), thru the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC, BAC-ITR), invites qualified bidders by way of sealed bids for the supply and delivery of:

16	NOS	PRINTER, DOT MATRIX, 132 COLS., 24 PINS
6	NOS	PRINTER, HEWLETT PACKARD, DESK JET, COLORED
50	NOS	PRINTER, LASER, BLACK AND WHITE
10	NOS	COMPUTER SET, PENTIUM III, 600 MHZ (MINI.) BRANDED
2	NOS	COMPUTER NOTEBOOK
35	NOS	UPS, 500WATTS
1	NO.	FULL PRODUCT, OFFICE 2000 PROFESSIONAL
15	NOS	LICENSED, OFFICE 2000 PROFESSIONAL
1	NO	DIGITAL VIDEO CAMERA
1	NO	PROFESSIONAL CAMERA
2	NOS	PAPER BINDER, HEAVY DUTY, MANUAL
2	NOS	PAPER CUTTER, HEAVY DUTY, MANUAL
4	NOS	TIME, DATE AND NLRC LOGO RECEIVING MACHINE, HEAVY DUTY
4	NOS	TIME AND ATTENDANCE RECORDER, ELECTRONIC, W/ BIOMETRIC TECH.
1	NO	PAYROLL SYSTEM SOFTWARE
2	NOS	PLAIN PAPER PHOTO COPIER
240	SQ.M.	PREMIUM CARPET, 100% POLYPROPYLENE BCF YARN, 20 OZ./SQ. YD, USA
1	SYS.	SOUND SYSTEM FOR NLRC CONFERENCE ROOM
1	NOS	TV COLORED, 35" SONY
1	NOS	VCD PLAYER/RECORDER, SONY
1	NOS	VHS PLAYER/RECORDER, SONY

Interested bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Secretariat, Office of the Executive Clerk, 7th Floor, PPSTA Bldg., No. 4, Banawe Ave. cor. P. Florentino Sts., Quezon City. Meeting/bidding will be held at the Conference Room, 6th flr. The bidding schedules are as follows:

JUNE 6, 2001, 10:00 A.M. - Pre bid meeting
JUNE 13, 2001, 10:00 A.M. - Last day of submission of prequalification requirements
JUNE 20, 2001, 10:00 A.M. - Last day of submission of bid proposals & Opening of bids

NLRC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, as well as, waive any defect or informality on the bids received, accept the offer most advantageous to the government and does not guarantee that any award shall be made. Its decision shall be final and binding.

(Sgd.) **PERLITA B. VELASCO**
Chairman, BAC, BAC-ITR

(PDI--May 21, 22 & 23, 2001)

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LOCATED 2000 Pasong Tamo cnr. Malugay St., Makati City

On View: Friday 25th May 2001 9:00am - 5:00pm and Saturday 26th 9:00am - 12:00noon
Deadline for Submission: All bids must be received at the Auctioneers office before 5:00pm Saturday 26th May 2001

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PEOPLE at WORK

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ REGINA GALANG REYES, Subsection Editor

Vigilance in the workplace

By Ernie O. Cecilia

WE saw the vigilance of many of our countrymen over their most sacred right–suffrage. In some precincts, we heard how the townspeople guarded the ballots with their lives. Before the election, the Filipinos' favorite pastime, we read how a few lost their lives in this democratic process. Vigilance is truly the price of liberty. General Douglas MacArthur once said, "The inescapable price of liberty is an ability to preserve it from destruction."

In the same manner, employees need to be vigilant in the new workplace, if they expect to survive, much less succeed in their careers. The new rules of doing business are rapidly changing the landscape of the workplace. This phenomenon has caught many employees unprepared to cope with the dangers, traps and threats in the new workplace.

Here are some tips on how to cope with a few of the emerging "threats" that now abound in the workplace and can derail one's career:

1. Loss of job

A regular employee must realize that he can lose his job for either of two reasons—a just or an authorized cause. Just causes are usually attributable to the fault of the employee, such as violation of company rules and regulations. Authorized causes are usually due to economic reasons or to changes to ensure the survival of the enterprise, such as automation, organizational restructuring, total or partial closure, etc.

Therefore, you must not do anything silly that will make the employer lose the trust and confidence reposed on you. Keep your eyes and ears open to news of an impending closure, usually due to unprofitable operations. In case of loss of job for reasons other than those stated above, you can question your termination or complain with the proper government authorities.

2. Skills obsolescence

With rapid technological advances, we can always expect new and better ways of doing work. The skills of yesteryears may not be enough to do the work today. There is a marked change in the nature of work itself. The prototype of a productive worker in the past is a strong man who will do everything he is told to do, without asking questions. Today, the prototype is a woman with intellectual and emotional intelligence.

To guard against obsolescence in the workplace, you must take every opportunity to train, retrain, and learn new skills, even if they are not directly related to your present work. The worst thing that could happen to you is that you will forfeit your place in the organization because you don't have the required skills. Continuous learning is a hedge against obsolescence, especially in a labor surplus economy like the Philippines.

3. Failure to give value

Time was when people were hired and rewarded for simply being good. Good attitude is highly desirable, but that alone will not fetch you a good job. It is no longer enough that you don't do anything silly or that you give your boss an apple everyday. At the end of the day, the question is "Have you contributed to the value created by the organization?"

Emerging human resources systems are now able to help managers differentiate and discriminate among good, better, and best employees. New performance ethics in the workplace dictate that employees must merit the pay they receive. Promotion will be based on the possession of appropriate competencies to perform a particular job. Promotion will no longer be seen as a reward for a good performance, as it was the case in some companies.

Be constantly aware of the contribution required of you. Clarify with your boss your "performance contract" and take stock of your actual contribution. During performance reviews, know where you stand and discuss your case intelligently.

4. Performance-based rewards

The business of managing people has never been more important than now in the global economy. New work ethics demand that greater rewards be shared with those who contribute more, not necessarily those who need more.

Today, many companies and unions have already agreed to performance-based collective bargaining salary increases. In the past, such increases are usually given across-the-board to all members of the bargaining unit, regardless of the performance of the members and of the company.

To get the most benefit from the pie, help create a bigger pie and don't quarrel over getting an increasingly bigger share of a dwindling pie. Truly, you cannot draw water from an empty well.

5. Globalization

While globalization caught a lot of employers and employees unprepared, its advent has long been taken as a certainty. Your customers and suppliers will now come from practically any part of the globe. Your trading partners are now your competitors serving too your once captive market. You will hardly see some of these competitors because of their sheer formlessness and very lean organization. It is hard to believe that your company with thousands of "loyal and dedicated" employees will lose out in the market to a company with hardly ten employees working only through the computers.

Know and understand the new ways of doing business—e-commerce, m-commerce, etc. Learn how progressive and modern companies do business and acquire the skills needed to compete with international players. Stop wishing that globalization is not here. Learn the rules and perfect your game.

It's time to accept the harsh realities in the changing workplace. Gain as many competencies as you can to qualify for as many jobs as possible, to be able to move from one project to another either in the same company or in other companies. After all, even in the case of regular employment, the services of an employee can be terminated for just or authorized causes. The real security lies in having the ability to do a variety of jobs over time in any team, department, or company.

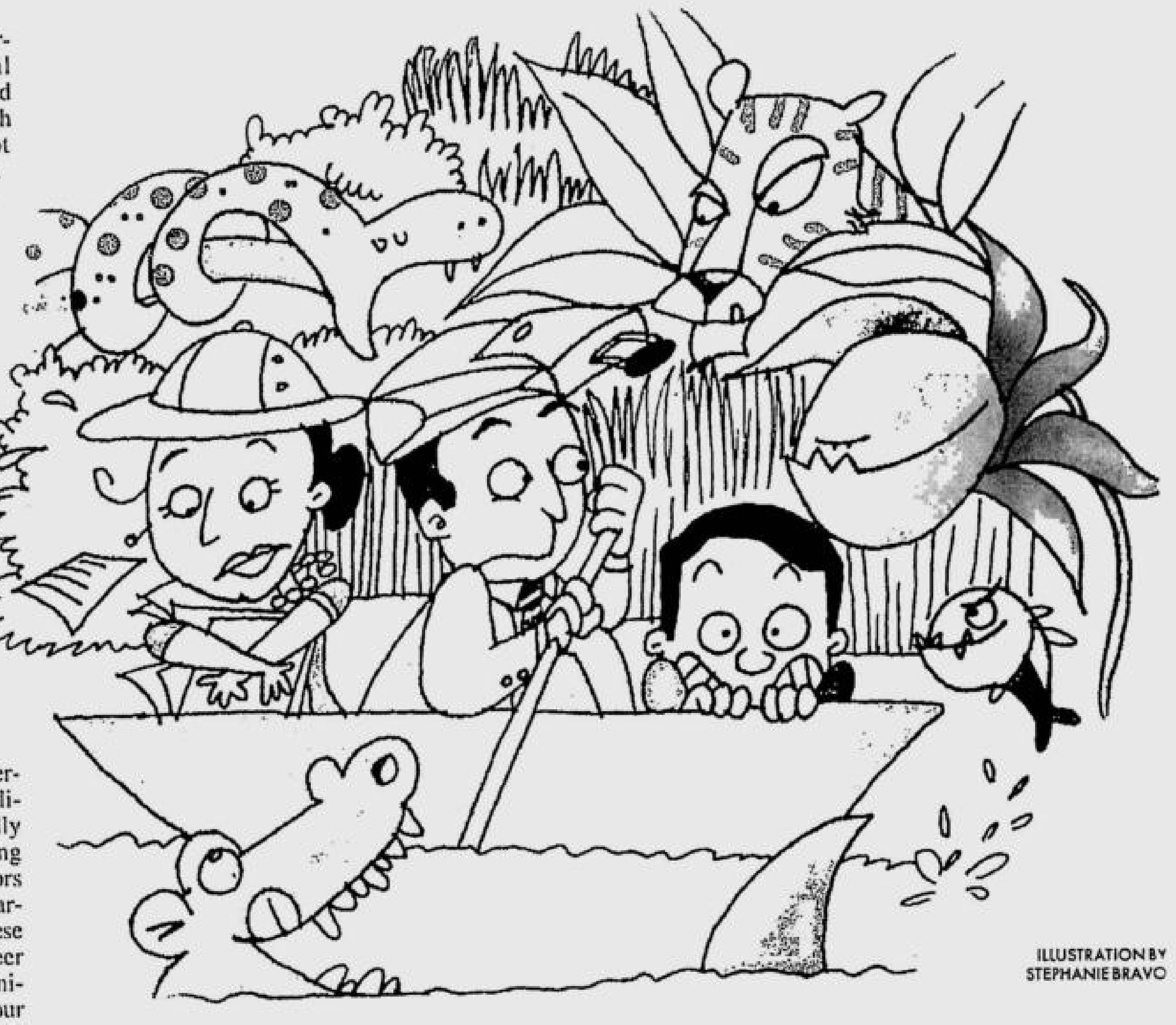
ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHANIE BRAVO

Do you really want to have a job and keep it too? There is a price you have to pay–eternal vigilance on your career.

(The author is president and CEO of EC Business Solutions and Career Center. His books on career management, "How to Get a Job" and "How to Keep Your Job," are available at National Book Store, Power Books, and Bookmark. He can be reached at erniec@edsamail.com.ph.*)*

Is character education needed in business?

By Tita Datu Puangco

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

A FEW years ago, while doing research on values education, I came upon a book entitled "The Ethical Edge," which suggested that companies of the future would have to invest resources for the character education of their employees. To many, this may sound too elementary. But I think the authors made a good point. What are your thoughts on character education in business organizations? If you agree that it is a tenable proposition, how should an executive go about it in his or her company? Thank you.

University Professor

We fully agree to your view that companies should invest resources for the character education of their employees. But we believe that it should be done now and not in the future. When we see how we have fallen behind our Asian neighbors in terms of economic development, not because we are less bright and innovative, then we can try to look at the flaws in our national character. What flaws lie within us as a people which hinder us from moving forward? We need character education for all sectors. And my realization is, more than ever, also for politicians and political parties.

Election experience

The recent accusations of massive cheating in the recent elections are proofs of the urgency of this proposal. It is embarrassing that we confess to be a dominantly Christian country and yet, the papers banner the fact that the recent election has recorded the highest level of election-related crimes.

What is tragic about the recent political exercises and events is how our young people are starting to lose hope of real change in the values that underpin our economy and politics. My daughter was telling me how 80 percent of her friends have gone either to Singapore, the US and Australia because they think there will be a brighter future for them in these countries. Our youths are starting to despair.

Years ago, as student leaders in the university, we were full of ideals, hopes and aspirations. And now we are the adults. And things have not changed and perhaps, they have in fact worsened. But as we experience the negatives in our society, we are also encouraged by the positive trend of growth in the memberships of movements that cultivate the practice of gospel-based values for Christians. We also realize that movements in other religions such as among Buddhists or Muslims are also moving towards renewal. But we all know we should do more.

Value formation

Based on our experience, a good number of forward looking companies have began to invest in value formation which may be the corporate version of character education as taught in schools.

Business enterprises have the necessary resources to invest in value formation. They also have the strategic imperative and necessary means to run the value programs efficiently with maximum impact. They can be a primary catalyst and influence to help the nation grow its conscience.

Value formation is critical in this age of value confusion. All around us we see the loss of traditional values. People contend with rapidly changing cultural norms that deeply affect the value systems of individuals and societies. In previous periods, the mother would be at home to supervise the growth and character development of children. Today is the generation of working mothers. With both parents normally at work, value formation is left to surrogate parents or "*yayas.*"

Then, we experience different and opposing values co-existing in society. There are law enforcers who break the law. There are good fathers who cheat on their wives. People have become more tolerant of these dissonant behaviors. We also see how mass media has also contributed to value confusion. Finally, most people are not able to process and integrate themselves. They are not able to reflect on imposed versus their freely chosen values.

Programs

We have seen a variety of programs run in organizations. There are several types. One would be a value-formation program customized towards the corporate values. The program seeks to align individual values of corporate members to the corporate values. This is the more popular approach. Recently, I went to a supermarket where they start the morning with the recitation of their company credo focused on the company core values.

Then, there are programs that focus on ethical decision-making. These are companies, especially multinationals, who strictly comply with anti-trust laws. They have typically formalized their values in a code of ethics. People in marketing and purchasing, who are vulnerable because of their positions, are given priority in said courses. Although in a number of companies, the ethics course has been incorporated in the new recruit orientation and therefore is a must for everyone.

Next are programs that focus on holistic living, taking into consideration the different aspects of a person's life. We have designed for instance a program for companies that focuses on understanding and living well the seven aspects of their life namely, work, relationships, relationship with a Supreme Being, health, harmony with environment, continuous learning and communications. The focus is on individual effectiveness first. Then, it establishes a close link to organizational effectiveness. We are biased towards this approach.

IS CHARACTER/P. B13

Philippine Daily Inquirer
PEOPLE at WORK LIVE!
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by Moje Ramos-Aquino
Columnist, Recipes for Learning
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5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.
FREE!

"Values of the Global Pinoy"
by Ernie O. Cecilia
Writer, People at Work and
Author of the career books,
"How to Get a Job - Tips 2" and
"How to Keep Your Job- Tips 3"
May 30, 2001 (Wednesday)
5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.
FREE!

"Effective Coaching Skills"
by Consultants of
Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting
May 31, 2001 (Thursday)
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Fees to be donated to a worthy social project
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Asian Institute of Management, 123 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City

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How do you deal with criticism at work?

WORKING WOUNDED

By Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: I just went out drinking with one of the people I manage and after a few beers, he confided in me that most of the people in our department soft-pedal the feedback they give me. He said they're afraid that if they seem too critical I'll jump all over them. How can I turn this around?

They're Walking on Eggshells

I'm no psychic, so I can't tell you exactly what is making your co-workers fear you. But I can tell you about a psychic fair I once visited. For five dollars you had your pick: tarot card readers, aura cleaners and an entire galaxy of astrologers. Unfortunately, the name psychic fair was all too accurate because the clairvoyant ability of most of them was just that—fair.

Well, guess what? You're no psychic either, which means you can't predict who will give you the best input. Therefore, you need to encourage everyone to give it. For some good advice on how to do that, I turned to Oren Harari's book, "Leapfrogging the Competition" (American Century Press, 1997). The book is written mainly for corporations, but its lessons about positioning and strategy apply equally well to individuals. I've adapted the following questions from it.

• Do you actively encourage criticism? Think of criticism as an early warning system: it's better to hear it from your employees and peers than from your boss. But if you want to hear it, you've got to ask for it—often enough that people take your requests seriously. You can do it at regular staff meetings, at one-on-one meetings, or each time you unveil a new project or idea. Ask for feedback—and then allot enough time in the meeting for people to really speak their minds.

• Are you quiet while they talk? Do you refrain from defending yourself when they're done? If you jump to the defense each time someone criticizes you, no wonder people are scared. You've got to do what your kindergarten teacher told you to do when someone else was talking: zip your mouth. But that's not all—you also have to be aware of the message you send with your facial expressions and body language.

• Do you show them you're listening? Try paraphrasing what they said. They'll know you heard them; you'll know you heard them right. Paraphrasing is one of those essential corporate survival skills that just doesn't get the respect it deserves.

• Do you say "thank you" when people criticize you? Sure it's awkward—but you'll show them you really wanted to hear their thoughts.

I bet your company has shelled out money more than once for some high-priced consultants. Did they tell you everything was hunky-dory? Or did they offer some high-priced "complaints"? Well, maybe it's my Jersey upbringing, but I've adopted a practical attitude toward complainers. I just think of them as consultants who are giving me for free something I'd otherwise pay for. Such a deal!

Here are the results of the recent workingwounded.com poll: What song do you sing when you are criticized at work?

—Ain't nobody's business if I do, 23 percent

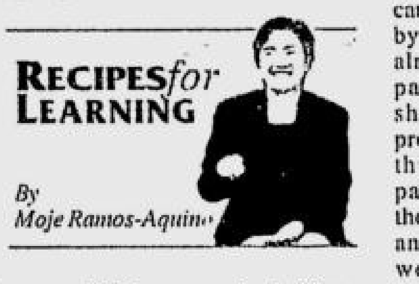
—Ain't misbehaving, 34 percent

—Ain't it de truth, 43 percent

Our winning strategy for dealing with criticism comes from Chris in Portland. "I hit the mental pause button and decide if this is a well-intentioned criticism which has some basis in truth or a personal attack. If it's the former, I try to clarify what the person is saying to show I have heard them and will consider their approach. If it's the latter, I thank them for their advice."

(E-mail feedback to bob@workingwounded.com.*)*

Undo, unlearn, get unstuck


RECIPES *for* LEARNING

By Moje Ramos-Aquino

LIFE is wonderful and every day is a great and unique day. No two days are alike. Every day brings with it a new set of adventure, challenges, opportunities and many more.

Do I hear you disagree and say that life is boring? Why is it boring for you? Ah, perhaps, you do the same things at home and at work, day in and day out. You go to work and you knock off at the same time with an occasional overtime work, day in and day out. You meet the same people, day in and day out. You report to the same workstation, day in and day out.

On weekends, it is the same routine of cleaning the house, going to church, doing the laundry, watching television endlessly, going out to check out what's new in the mall, etc.

You are busy, all right, and bored. You are surviving; you are not living. No wonder you consider your life boring. I'll boldly say that you are prone to envy and self-pity and you enjoy the company of crabs.

Life management

This is your Workshop on Managing Time in Order to Manage Your Life to Achieve Your Life Plans and Enjoy Every Minute of It. You manage your time; you manage your life. When you are ready, you will transform your boring life into a purposeful and enjoyable one. Only when you are ready—but make it soon.

How do you become ready? You did the first step, you ran through an inventory of your whole life last week in this column. Now, and this is very important, forget everything for a while as you undo everything that you are doing and unlearn everything that you already know and get yourself unstuck from your past and your habits. Start from scratch. Start with a clean slate. Start smelling and looking fresh.

Kalimutan mo muna ang lahat. Isipin mong binigyan ka ng Diyos ng panibagong pag-asa at ikaw ay magsisimula ngayon ng iyong bagong buhay. You may want to derive inspiration from John Rise who said, "No matter what man's past may have been, his future is spotless." Or from Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., who said, "I may be old but I haven't stopped growing."

Empty your mind

How do you unlearn, undo and get unstuck? Empty your mind of any negative thoughts and feelings. Remove your shoulds, musts, ought-tos, etc. Be kind to yourself. Then, focus on your life plans, your personal vision, mission, values, big life goals, immediate life goals, objectives, action plans—these constitute your future. Your present is represented by your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, your dreams and fantasies and your deep, dark secrets. What you will manage now is the gap between your ideal future and where you are right now. It is the time gap between the future and the present that you need to manage.

Please note that there is nothing here that talks about your past because it is gone and, by now, you have already mined the past that has shaped your present. When you think about your past, think about the lessons learned and strengths and weaknesses acquired. Never mind the particular people and events, they do not matter now. Unlearn. Undo. Get unstuck.

From where you are now, you will not be asking too much from life, it is just that as William Somerset Maugham says, "It is a funny thing about life that if you accept anything but the very best, you very often get it."

Forget

Unlearn. Undo. Get unstuck. Forget about your hurts, your frustrations, your victories, your joys, those boring times. They are no more. Your frustrations will only tie you to a post and stop you from moving on. Your past victories are no guarantee for future victories and will give you false hopes. The entire game has changed or the rules or the players or the environment. Unlearn. Undo. Get unstuck. Let us concentrate on the present, the here and now.

Here's a list of some before and after that you might want to consider *(see table).*

Notice that good old values have not changed; only the way we define and live our values have changed and will change. "And the same flower that smiles today, tomorrow will be dying," says Robert Herrick.

Unlearn. Undo. Get unstuck. A timely text message from Haidee Enriquez of Dunkin' Donuts: "We are like trees. We must shed old leaves and create new ones, new directions, in order to grow." Stay with these thoughts until next week.

Personal note

I am very proud of the achievements of my younger brother, Dr./Prof. Jesus F. Ramos, who recently graduated from the University of the Philippines (Diliman) with a doctorate degree in Philosophy—Filipino Language Planning. It was a very proud and joyous moment in our family life when I went up the stage during the University graduation to pin his honors on him. Our mom, Mrs. Benita Fernandez-Ramos, joined him at his college graduation rites the day before and was too tired for a repeat performance.

Why Filipino? Jess spent nine years of his life in Sooc, Camarines Norte, under the care of our maternal grandmother, Lola May, because he was very sickly as a little boy. When he came to join our family here in Manila, he spoke mostly Bicol and English with very little Tagalog. He got a lot of teasing. He endeavored to learn Tagalog. The next year, he was in Grade VI, he became editor of the Mapa High student newspaper, "*Ang Gabay,*" and even won as the best editor in the National Secondary Schools Press Conference. At UP, he took up undergraduate and graduate studies, majoring in Filipino. Immediately after graduation, he became a faculty member in his Department and has stayed there since. He has received many honors and awards. He has spoken in many fora and conferences. This is a crowning glory for Jess. It is always a delight to hear him discuss in Filipino, not to mention his deep grasp of language issues. Currently, he is the chairman of the Language Education Council (LEDCO), an umbrella organization of all Filipino & English associations in the country.

Congratulations, my dear baby brother Jess! And I know that you will use these blessings not only to propagate our national language and help in nourishing it, but most importantly, to use the language to sow the goodness of the Lord. It will then be your greatest achievement.

(E-mail feedback to moje.ramos@aquino.zzn.com)

Before	Now
Lifetime employment	Lifetime employability
Loyalty to company & boss	Loyalty to customers
Management by rules	Management by values
Time card, reports	Results
I am because of my past	You are what you want to be
Job description, single skill	Job profile, multi-skills
Company policies & standards	Customer needs & standards
Mandates, controls, bully-tactics	Buy-ins, relationship building
Selling, marketing techniques	Relationship building
Deadlines	Just-in-time
Profits, profits, money, money	Social responsibility, concern for environment
Ownership	Stewardship
To each his own	I am my brother's keeper
TB, heart diseases	AIDS, cancer Involvement
Apathy	Involvement
I, me & myself	God in the center
Heaven on earth	Heaven with God

Is character...

(From page B12)

Then, there are programs that also attempt to change the environment within which people work, which we will explain as the Operating System for People.

Ethical decisions

Let me first give some practical tips to our readers on the second mode, the focus on ethical decision-making. These are from Blanchard and Peale who have co-authored a book entitled "The Power of Ethical Decision Making." Two of their simple no nonsense statements are easy to remember. "There is no right way to do a wrong thing." Then "there is no pillow as soft as a clear conscience."

They also present an easy "Ethics Check." If you are confronted by an ethical dilemma, ask yourself the following questions: Is it legal? Will I be violating either civil law or company policy? Is it balanced? Is it fair to all concerned in the short term as well as the long term? Does it promote win-win relationships? Then, the final question: Will it make me proud? Would I feel good if my decision was published in the newspaper? Would I feel good if my family knew about it?

Two years ago, I had the golden opportunity to have dinner with Rob Lebow who had a powerful program that promotes shared values in organizations. His ideas are incorporated in a book he coauthored with William L. Simon entitled "Lasting Change."

He proposes what he calls an operating system for people. His team undertook research to answer the question "What do people want in their work environment to be more productive and to perform at the top of their game?" They came across a research study conducted by the University of Chicago where 17 million workers in 40 countries were asked what work environment people want.

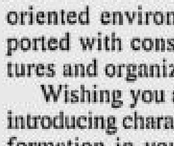
The survey yielded eight values that address universal human needs. They mentioned they were so obvious, one would think they were reading the Bible. They were eight shared values. These are truth, trust, mentoring, openness, risk taking, giving credit, honesty and caring. They propose to create an environment where these values are shared.

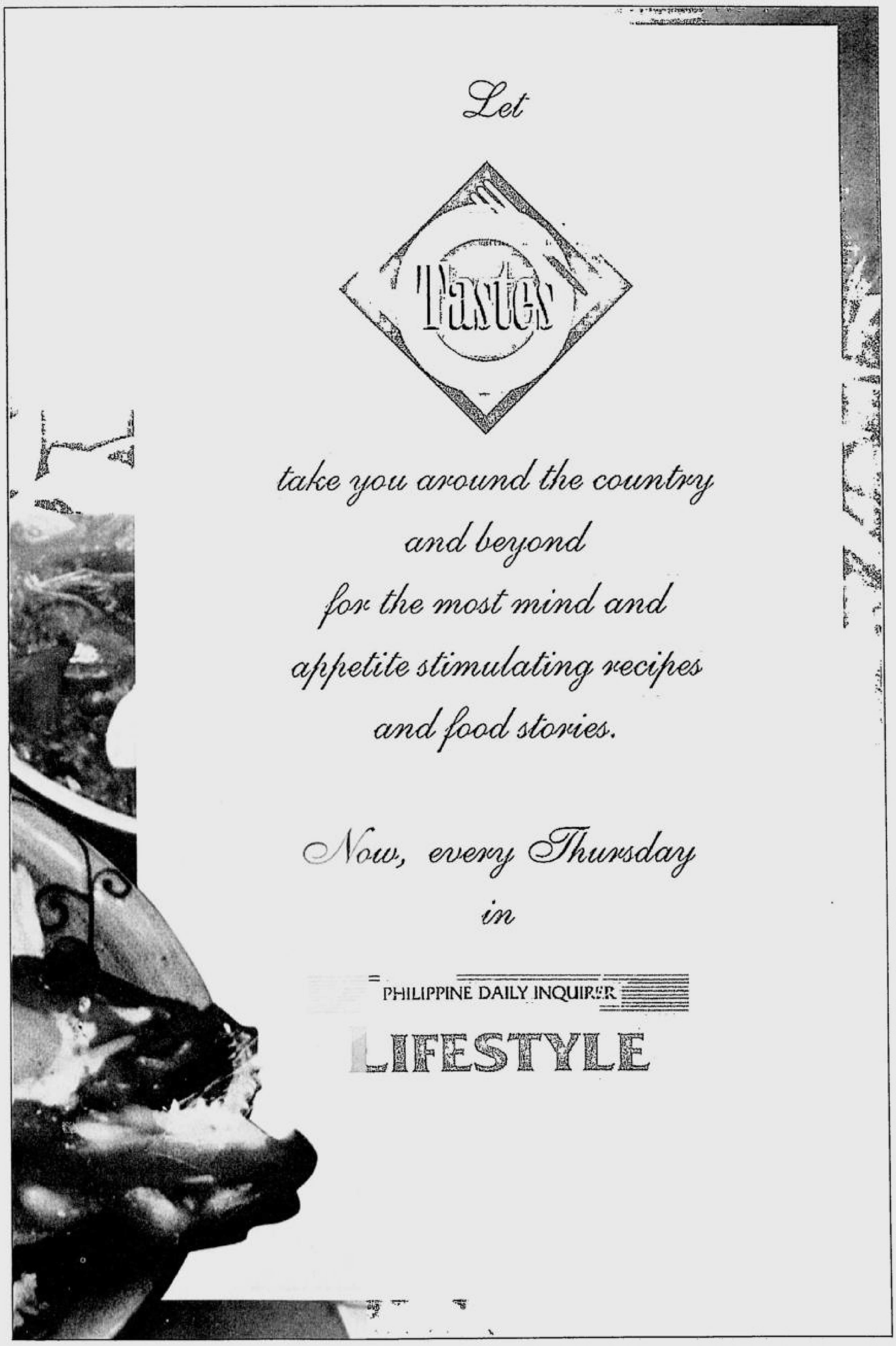
Values approach

They propose a values approach that does not try to fix people's behavior, as people who join the company would come from diverse backgrounds. They instead propose to establish a new context in terms of the existing environment. They then establish the shared values, standards, systems and structures to make the eight shared values happen. It means linking people to the organization in non-manipulative ways.

At this point, you may ask which is the best system. We would say the best system depends very much on the needs of the organization and the resources the company is willing to invest. But let me remind you, that when you begin, you have to persist. Value formation should not be seen as merely a fad or the latest management initiative. We have to realize that a value-oriented environment has to be supported with consistent systems, structures and organization.

Wishing you all the best in terms of introducing character education or value formation in your university or company. Thank you for your letter.


(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@pacific. net.ph *or fax to tel. no. 892-2902.)*



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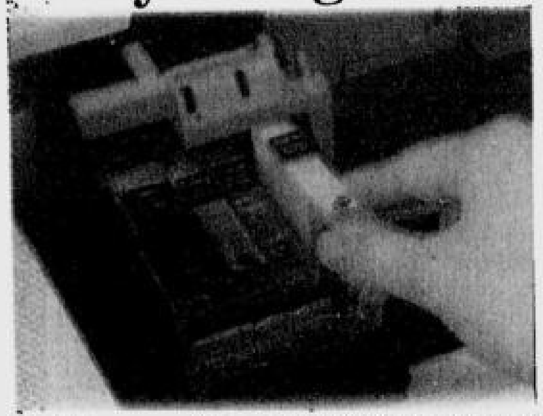

Filipinos are getting more demanding and critical when it comes to their printing requirements. High quality printouts, fast speed printing, and affordability are the usual considerations of Filipinos in purchasing a printer.

Majority of our consumers limit their deliberation to the printer's performance and unit price only. But have you ever considered the cost of consumables before buying a printer?

The most common complaint of colour printer owners is the high cost of colour ink cartridges. Conventional printers usually have a single ink cartridge for the 3-colour inks (cyan, magenta and yellow), so if your yellow is used up, you have to replace the entire colour.cartridge even if you have not used a single drop of your cyan or magenta.

This dilemma is the primary reason why Canon developed its Think Tank™ printer series. The Think Tank Technology is an intelligent ink management system that yields significant cost savings for its users. Think Tank printer use a unique individual ink tank system where each colour (cyan, magenta, yellow) is individually loaded into a clear container and separately replaced when a specific colour runs-out. Another unique feature of these bubble jet printer is the real-time ink level detector that accurately tells the user when ink is dropping or out. This translates into low maintenance, zero wastage, high quality printing.

While Canon's Thin Tanks System helps reduce costs for users, its patented Micro Fine Droplet Technology and Drop Modulation Technology enhances the printing quality of these bubble jet printers. This printer series is the most cost-effective, environment-friendly, and practical printer series in the market today.

Canon Think Tank printers are available in different models to meet the demands of various printer users--BJC 3000, the perfect printer for home and small office use; BJC 6200, your ideal business printer; BJC 6500, for wide format professional business printing; and BJC 8200 the high-end photographic quality printer.

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3. You can drop your entries at drop boxes located at designated Canon dealers in GMA or you may enclose your entries in a white legal size envelope and mail to: "CANON THINK TANKS CELL RUSH"
c/o Canon Marketing Philippines, Inc.
2153 Don Chino Roces Ave., Makati City, Philippines (1200)
4. For provincial entries, participants must enclose their raffle coupons in a white legal size envelope and mail to the same address stated above.
5. A total of 4 weekly raffle draws will be held at the Canon Marketing Philippines, Inc. head office located at Marvin Plaza Bldg., Pasong Tamo, Makati City at 5 p.m.

Deadline for Submission of entries	Raffle date	Weekly Draw Prizes
April 29	May 2	25 winners of Siemens M35
May 6	May 9	30 winners of Siemens A36
May 13	May 16	40 winners of Nokia 5110i
June 10	June 13	50 winners of Nokia 3310

6. A participant can only win once during the promo period.
7. All non-winning entries will be qualified for the succeeding weekly draws and for the grand raffle draw.
8. The Grand draw will be held on June 20, 2001 at Canon Marketing Philippines, Inc. head office at 4 p.m.
GRAND DRAW PRIZES:
2 winners of Siemens SL45
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8 winners of Nokia 8250
9. Winners will be notified via registered mail and telephone. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
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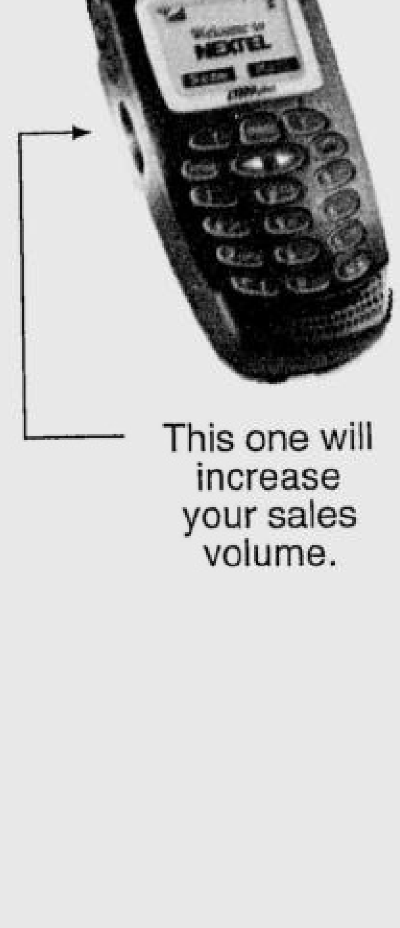

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2bU!

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

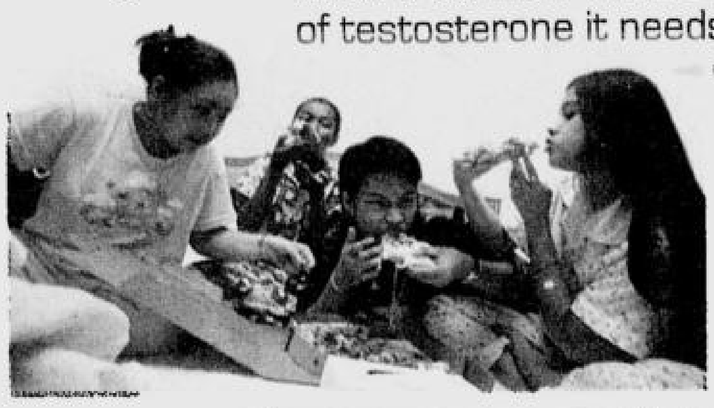
CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor ▣ PAM PASTOR, Chief of Correspon

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2001 C1

For feedback or suggestions ls_2bu@inquirer.com.ph

Girls uninterrupted

Before our new male correspondents give 2bU! the dose of testosterone it needs, indulge us with our all-out girls' issue.



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What to do with hat head, widow's peak and tired, aching feet

Makeover 911

Kinny Salas

I GET to "preserve" my highlights this summer by wearing a cap or floppy hat when directly under the hot sun. You're right in saying that hair needs sun block, too. Problem: When I am indoors and remove it I end up with a deformed hairdo with bumps and dents. What products can I apply that will make it easy to restyle? My experiments have been futile.

PETRIFIED PAT

Such phenomenon is called "hat head." On those days when you know you are going to wear a hat, don't apply too many styling products because you are literally setting your hair for "hat head." Depending on your hairstyle, you can either wear no styling products or a light spray or gel or very little hairdressing cream. After removing the hat, spritz your hair with some water and tousle with your fingers till dents disappear. An inexpensive spritzer is that plastic atomizer girls use like those of baby cologne products.

I'M at a widow's peak and have been stuck with the same hairstyle since grade school. It's only the length that changes. I can't put bangs because it stands or the style of my hair gets messy. I would like a change, what else can I do? My hair has been parted on the left as this is my better angle and the rest are almost slightly shorter strands near my face.

HEART

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

I'm at a widow's peak myself. I know what you mean. My basic hairstyle is pretty much like yours right now. If I want a change, I part my hair down the middle and try a hat head, widow's peak.

Blowdry the sides straight or fluff it up for a fuller body. You'd be surprised at the change from your usual style. If you really want bangs, they have to be thick and heavy enough to weigh down like Cleopatra's. Wispy bangs will part and stick out all over your face. I'm apprehensive about bangs, though, because growing them out can be a tedious process and they give my forehead zits.

WHAT is the cure for tired, aching feet? I am going to Europe for a business trip which I do every summer and I walk a lot to save on expensive taxi fare. Is there a way to remove the pain ASAP? I can't wear rubber shoes because of meetings with clients.

TREKKER

Use shoes with insoles (cushioning). Shoe brands like Naturalizer are made for such ordeals and will definitely lessen the pain. The quickest way to rid of painful feet is to use an empty soda bottle and roll it back and forth on the floor with your arches. Do this within the privacy of your hotel room. I also bend my knees and stretch my ankles to improve circulation. Before sleeping, soak feet in warm water with eucalyptus or mint oils and give your feet a massage. Prop your feet up on the wall or headboard a few minutes before sleeping to let blood flow on other areas of the leg. This is very important if you want to avoid varicose veins.

For any questions, or products you want to road test, write to Makeover 911, PDI Lifestyle or fax at 897-4805

SURVEY

Guys, what bugs you most about girls?

2bU! gives the boys the chance to vent

WHY do they have to go to the bathroom in hordes?—**Edwin, 18**

They shriek all the time.—**Mike, 17**

The female of the species has this license to be fickle-minded. The thing is, we should try to understand them—and unless you're a mind-reader, that's difficult. It bugs me big time.—**Eldric Peredo, 18**

They can't make up their minds.—**Ceej, 17**

I hate it when *sila pa ang humahabol sa* guys. I think it's cheap. It's a major turn-off. Oh, and when they fake the big O.—**sigma_drummer, 16**

The game. I hate the game. Maria Clara *pakipot*-ness fused with girl power awakened makes for a player of a woman who plays the game to the hilt.—**GP Reyes, 26**

When they expose too much of their flesh to attract attention.—**Chester, 22**

I hate it when girls lie about stuff. Like, "How did you get my number?" And the girl goes, "'Um, I just invented it.'"—**Joseph, 15**

Women are too possessive when it comes to relationships. They're selfish most of the time.—**Ed, 20**

Sometimes girls have this attitude of being close-minded. And their mood swings! I love to tease them.—**Gelo Gazzingan**

The thing that bugs me most is their being *maarte*.—**Bong Cielo, 20**

Too much cosmetics!—**Roy, 21**

I keep asking why women keep falling for the wrong men when there are so many others just waiting out there.—**Christian Manaloto, 25**

The only thing that bugs me is most girls are fickle-minded.—**John Wil, 20**

When girls have PMS.—**Lloyd Serenio, 16**

When she always asks why I don't call her.—**Bi, 16**

They would sometimes avoid talking about sensitive issues and just assume that things will be all right the next time you meet. But when guys are the ones who avoid talking about sensitive matters, the girls brand them as insensitive freaks. Now would anyone please tell us what this game is all about?—**Michael Garcia, 21**

It bugs me when they're *maarte* and *pa-sosyal*.—**Lord Artoo, 16**

It bugs me most when a girl is the *pa-sosyal* type. I just want them the way they are.—**Oliver, 17**

I hate it when they flirt with guys.—**Ralph, 16**

I don't know why they hate receiving compliments from guys.—**Ced Morales, 16**

When girls find out how much you love them and they get spoiled and they take you for granted.—**Kingpin, 23**

Their ability to change their minds faster than the blink of an eye.—**Ferdz, 22**

What bugs me is the fact that I can't stop falling in love with them.—**Jigs, 22**

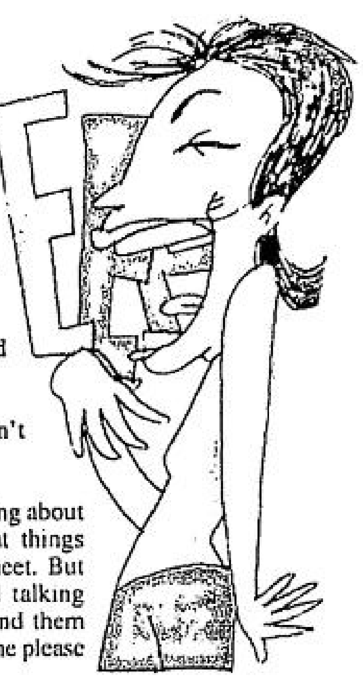
Their questions that never have a right answer. "Am I fat, Honey?" If I say yes, she'll go, "What?!?!?!" If I say no, she'll say, "That's because you're not paying attention." *Hay, naku.*—**Keith, 19**

I used to be a woman-hater. Why? They expect too much from you. When you're out on a date they constantly talk about their ideal guy—who is evidently not you. Those who wear sexy clothes—even when they don't look good in them. You can't act like yourself around them; when they say, "Duh! Hello! Whatever!—*ang arte*!; when she is late for an hour, no problem but when you're late for 10 minutes, you're dead; when she acts like she's my mom; when they treat guys like slaves.—**Ian, 17**

They always dump me.—**Pete, 20**

YES OF COURSE NOT!

ILLUSTRATIONS: STEPH BRAVO



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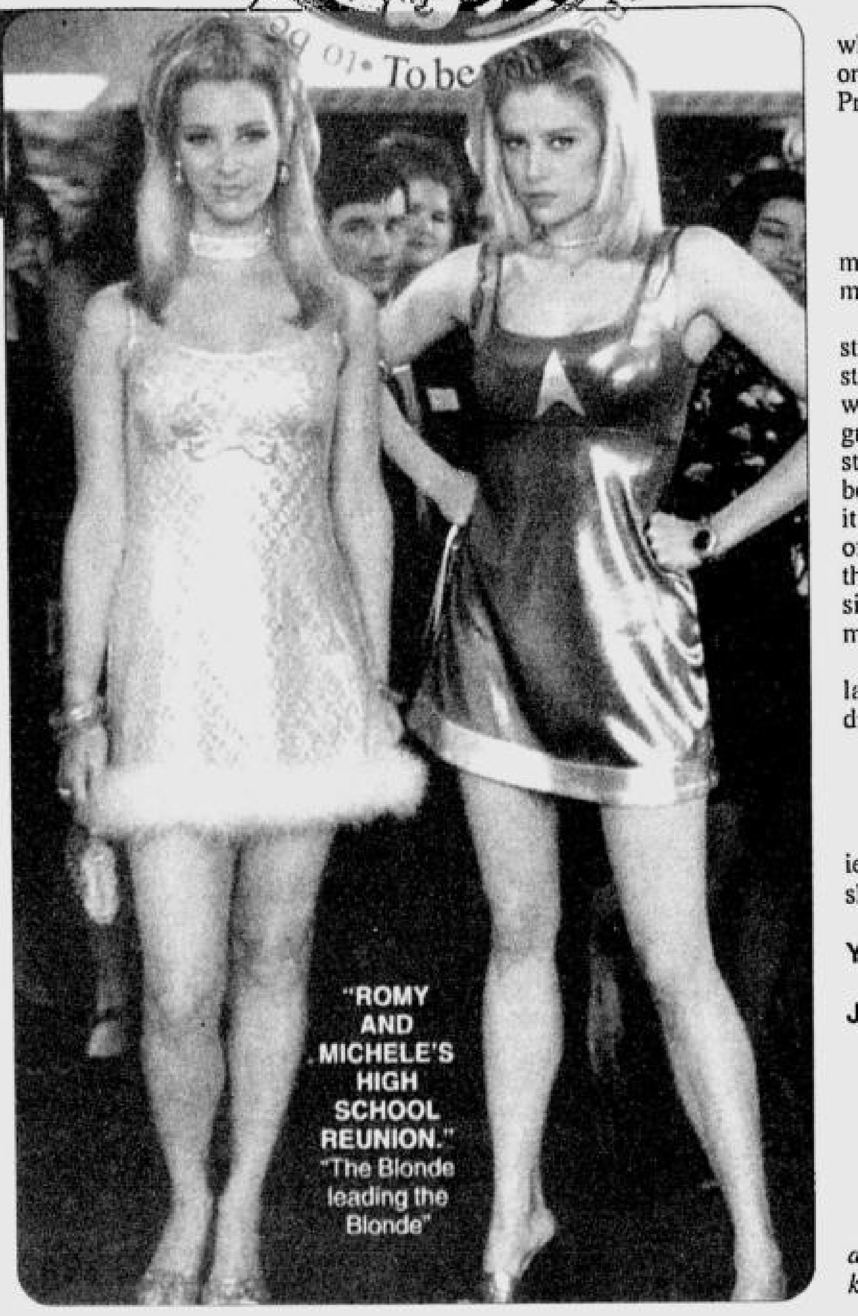
Chick flicks

By Tammy David and Kris Sevilla
2bU! Correspondents

"EVER AFTER." "Desire, defy, escape."

"MY BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING." "A comedy about finding your heart and losing your head"


"ROMY AND MICHELE'S HIGH SCHOOL REUNION." "The Blonde leading the Blonde"

What makes your boyfriend groan and your girlfriends stick like glue?

WHAT makes a chick flick? Take a bunch of girls with attitude, killer outfits and sometimes not-so-impossible missions. But not all chick flicks are overly shallow. Who can forget "Pretty in Pink" or Laney Boggs in "She's All That" after the quickie makeover scene, or that scene in "Clueless" where Cher Horowitz finally gets her life's low point when she realizes she's in love with her ex-stepbrother?

Take out the superficial plot and the teeny dialogue and you get something like "Charlie's Angels," and the classic John Hughes teen movies, which aren't all fluff as they feature funny yet witty lines from the savvy trio and the not-so *baduy* kids from the '80s.

'She's All That'

Heroine: Artsy-fartsy cynic turned prom queen contender Laney Boggs played by Rachel Leigh Cook.

Plot: Hot guy has three weeks to turn this artsy-fartsy loner into a full-blown prom queen.

Scene to watch out for: It's a toss-up between the staircase scene after the quickie makeover and the scene where Freddie Prinze Jr. only has a soccer ball to cover him *there*.

Chick rating: ★★★½

'Clueless'

Heroine: Shopaholic Beverly Hills princess portrayed by Alicia Silverstone.

Plot: Jane Austen's "Emma" meets "90210." High school goddess Cher makes her long suffering teachers fall in love to get a good grade and transforms a new girl from the Bronx to a sunny California chick, but turns out to be unlucky with guys. She eventually falls in love with the guy she never expected to even date—her ex-stepbrother.

Scene to watch out for: Basically the whole movie is chick-friendly. Listen to the witty lines ("Searching for a boy in high school is like searching for meaning in a Pauly Shore movie"). This movie also launched a thousand annoying expressions. ("Duh!", "Whatever!")

Chick rating: ★★★

'Romy and Michele's High School Reunion'

Heroines: Best buds played by Lisa Kudrow and Mira Sorvino try to outsmart everyone on their high school reunion.

Plot: Blondie buds have only a couple of weeks to polish their not-so-hot life after high school by losing weight and making up the perfect career. Everything is ruined when an old chain-smoker classmate squeals on them.

Scene to watch out for: The now-famous dance extravaganza to the tune of "Time After Time."

Chick rating: ★★★★

'Ever After'

Heroine: Cinderella-esque Danielle played by Drew Barrymore.

Plot: Think Cinderella with two extra maids, Anjelica Houston as the stepmother, shoes by Ferragamo, Leonardo Da Vinci as the fairy godmother and a prince charming.

Scene to watch out for: Any scene with Danielle and her prince charming.

Chick rating: ★★★★½

'My Best Friend's Wedding'

Heroine: Jealous food critic Julianne played by Oscar winner Julia Roberts.

Plot: Love revealed at the wrong time. Julianne tries to break up the upcoming wedding of her best friend Michael after she realizes she's in love him.

Scene to watch out for: Scene where the entire cast sings the Dionne Warwick classic "I Say a Little Prayer for You."

Chick rating: ★★★★★

'Sixteen Candles'

Heroine: Sweet sixteener Samantha Baker played by '80s teen movie queen Molly Ringwald.

Plot: Samantha's birthday is upstaged by her sister's wedding. Instead of a shindig, she has to deal with her bratty siblings, two sets of grandparents, a foreign exchange student in her house, a geek who borrows her underwear and shows it to half of the school and the guy of her dreams who ignores her. In the end, well, you have to watch it since this is one of the greatest teen movies ever.

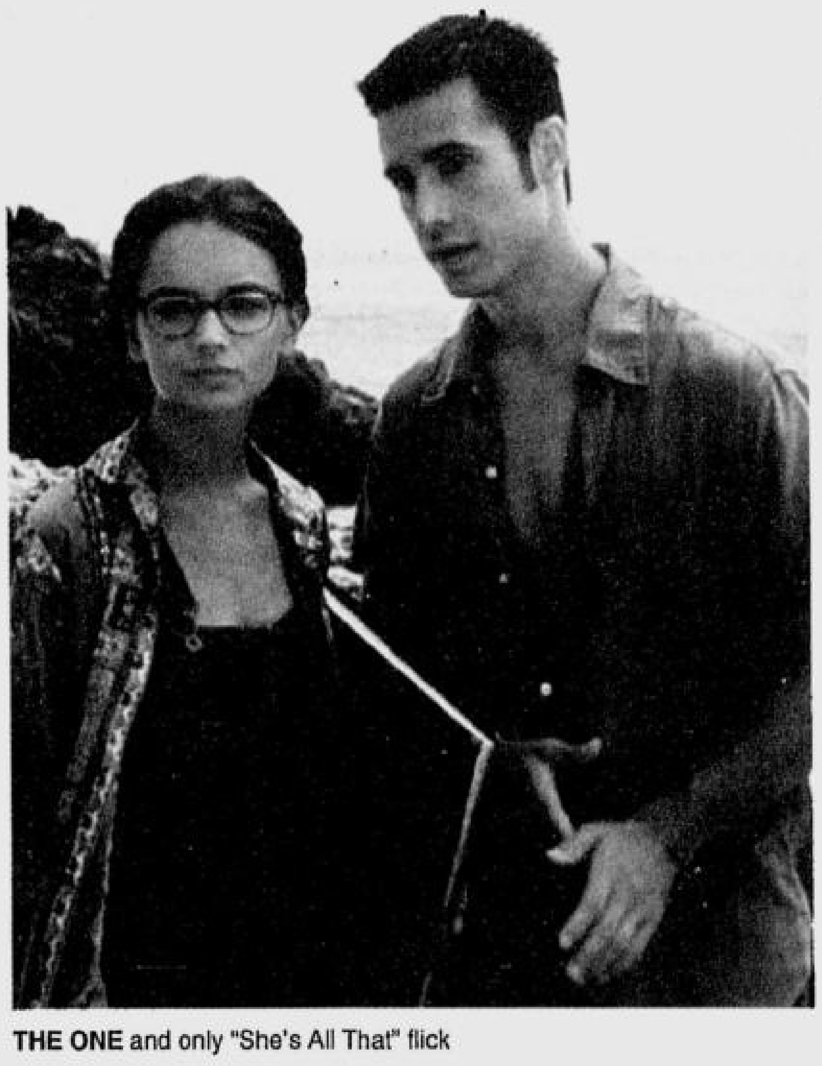
Scene to watch out for: The last scene with the guy of her dreams. Enough said.

Chick rating: ★★★★★

We also recommend these movies, if you can find them at video shops:

"10 Things I Hate About You"
"Baz Luhrman's Romeo + Juliet"
"Charlie's Angels"
"Jawbreaker"
"The Craft"
"Pretty in Pink"
"Breakfast at Tiffany's"

Email the authors at tammydavid@pinoycentral.com and kris_sevilla@yahoo.com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PHILIPPINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

94th Annual Convention

May 23 - 26, 2001, Manila Midtown Hotel, Ermita, Manila

"PMA Onwards to a Healthy Philippines in the Third Millennium"

MALACAÑANG PALACE
MANILA
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Sincerest greetings and felicitations to the men and women of the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) as they hold their 94th Annual Convention.

*The theme of this year's gathering, **"PMA Onwards to a Healthy Philippines in the Third Millennium"** parallels our government's thrust to rebuild the economy and raise the quality of life of our countrymen. Coming from the largest medical professional organization of the country, your commitment to make accessible quality and affordable health services to our people to ensure the welfare of our countrymen in indeed heartening.*

United in partnership, I am confident that we will be able to significantly advance the delivery of this basic service despite the challenge of a big budget deficit and a fast growing population. Through meaningful undertakings such as this, we will be able to consolidate the ranks of the health sector and come up with innovative and cost effective means to address the pressing concerns of our people. This is in support of our goal to eradicate poverty within this decade and pave the way for sustainable development and empowerment of the Philippine society.

It is thus my hope that this event will serve as a perfect venue to look back at the accomplishments and lessons of the past and use them as benchmarks and guides in bringing into fruition your plans and programs for the future.

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
MANILA
23 May 2001

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Senate
MANILA

I wish to extend my warmest congratulations and greetings to the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) on the occasion of its 94th Annual Convention on the 23 -26 May 2001 at the Manila Midtown Hotel.

As one of the government's partners in the promotion of health, you play a very significant role in the delivery of health care, especially to the less fortunate members of the society. I therefore salute you for taking on this very challenging and noble role.

On this occasion, I take the opportunity to remind you that we in the health sector are waging a war, not only against diseases but also against ignorance that either cause or aggravate these. We must therefore do our part and instill in the minds of our people the consciousness that prevention is the best cure.

Mabuhay kayo and Let's DOH it.
Again, my congratulations.
Let's DOH it at MABUHAY kayong lahat!

JUAN M. FLAVIER, M.D., M.P.H

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Greetings to the Officers and staff of the Philippine Medical Association on its 94th Annual Convention.

The realization of our vision of "Health for All" is hampered by the inequity in access to health care.

Your theme: " PMA Onwards to a Healthy Philippines in the Third Millennium" is a fitting complement to the Health Sector Reform Agenda (HSRA) by providing updates and advances in the field of medicine.

Your fullest cooperation to this worthy cause of the sectoral reform will redound to the success of our shared vision.

Mabuhay kayong lahat.

MANUEL M. DAYRIT, M.D., M.Sc.
Secretary of Health

PHILIPPINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
Quezon City

Sincere greetings from the Officers and the Board of Governors of the Philippine Medical Association.

We are optimistic that we shall achieve more brilliant and lasting success in the celebration of the PMA 94th Annual Convention. We know that with your unstinting support, the observance shall be most productive and meaningful. We commend the Over-all Organizing Committee for its hard work in preparing a four-day program of activities that shall surely be a most fitting culmination of our two-year stewardship of the PMA for the year 2000-2001. We are happy to note that physicians from all Component, Specialty, Sub-specialty and Affiliate Societies have all signified their willingness to give us their time, effort and other inputs to make this much-awaited Annual Convention not just an event but also an eventful milestone in the history of the PMA.

As in the previous years, "PMA – Onwards to a Healthy Philippines in the Third Millennium" is the recurring theme of our Convention as we are bent in making our country a land of wealth in wellness in this millennium. We have, therefore, focused the scientific sessions on topics designed not only to comply with the CME unit requirement, but also to enhance and uplift the professional growth of members and to update their knowledge so as to keep in step with the times in the work of promoting health and prolonging life. With this in view, we have lined up a distinguished array of guest lecturers and experts, who shall share their expertise agd knowledge through informative and interactive sessions.

May we take this opportunity to thank you all who have upheld the PMA stand on various issues. Thank you, too, for your kindness in always standing by us to keep the Philippine Medical Association vibrant and alive through your kind participation and involvement across the years.

NENITA C. LEE TAN, M.D
President

PHILIPPINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
Quezon City

My most esteemed greetings to all as we celebrate the 94th PMA Annual Convention of this Millennium.

By adopting the them "PMA onwards to a Healthy Philippines in the Third Millennium", we add another dimension that serve to energize the Philippine Medical Association by psychologically and spiritually integrating and synthesizing every member to promote peace and unity for progress.

It inspires us to undertake projects that promote patriotism in our daily life, reducing pervasive influence of politics bringing about oneness and single mindedness in the common effort for the benefit of our fellowmen.

It is my hope therefore that this convention will bring to light that we have always been united. The organizing committee express their profound thanks to the PMA Board headed by the PMA President, Dr. Nenita C. Lee Tan, the various pharmaceutical companies and other sponsors for their support and cooperation.

May Almighty God Bless us all. Mabuhay!

CARLITO P. PAJARILLO, MD
Over-all Chair
94th PMA Annual Convention

PHILIPPINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
OFFICERS AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS
2000 – 2001

Seated from left AMELIA L. PAJARO, MD, Governor for Southeastern Mindanao; TERESITA P. CASTILLO, MD, Governor for Manila; ANNIE A. FRANCISCO, MD, Governor for Central Tagalog; GIL C. FERNANDEZ, MD, Secretary-General; NENITA C. LEE TAN, MD, President; DIVINIA A. DIMAYUGA, MD, Vice President; PACIENCIA BEATO CAUILAN, MD, National Treasurer; LILIA C. CALZADO, MD, Governor for Quezon City; TIBURCIO S. MACIAS, MD, Governor for Western Mindanao; Standing from left EMMANUEL G. BUMANGLAG, MD, Governor for Northwestern Luzon; CARLOS E. INFANTE, MD, Governor for Western Visayas; WILFRIDO F. SIMBUL, MD, Governor for Northeastern Luzon; LARRY D. YAP, MD, Governor for Central Visayas; RENE C. VARGAS, MD, Governor for Caraga; SHERLITO T. SIAO, MD, Governor for Eastern Visayas; RUBEN O. GO, MD, Governor for Northern Mindanao; RAMON B. ABRAGAN, JR., MD, Governor for Northcentral Mindanao; REYNALDO D. GONZALES, MD, Governor for Southern Tagalog; ALFONSO A. DOLOROSO, MD, Governor for Rizal; RIZALINO A. ARQUILLO, MD, Governor for Bicol; HUBERTO F. LAPUZ, MD, Governor for Central Luzon.

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Category III – Laguna Medical Society
Category IV – Valenzuela Medical Society
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The Philippine Medical Association Across the Years

In 1902, an all physician group of 12 Filipinos and Americans in Manila formed the Manila Medical Society to be affiliated with the American Medical Association.

The application for affiliation was rejected by the American Medical Association for reason that the society was a single city organization. It was September 15, 1903, that Manila physicians founded the Philippine Islands Medical Association (PIMA) with an initial membership of one hundred American and Filipino Physicians.

Among the significant evolutionary events during the American regime were the following:

1. The growing government recognition of the Association's role in health. In 1927, the Philippine Islands Medical Association was consulted by the Secretary of Interior, upon the instructions of the Governor-General for a list of eligibles for the Board of Medical Examiners. During the administration of Governor-General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., the Department of Interior made it a policy to consult PIMA regarding eligibles to the Board whenever a vacancy existed.
2. The Amendments to the Medical Act. In 1929, through the initiative of the Board of Medical Examiners and the Philippine Islands Medical Association through the Iloilo Medical Society, an amendment to the Medical Act was passed in the Legislature (Act No. 3609). This prohibited foreigners from practicing medicine in the Philippines unless their own countries allowed Filipino physicians to practice there.
3. The establishment of the Code of Ethics Commission. In 1903, a commission was appointed to prepare a code of Medical Ethics especially adopted to the needs of the medical profession in the Philippines.

With a growing membership in component societies, Manila's monopoly as the site of the PIMA's convention activities was challenged in 1935. Due to the strong representation of the Iloilo Medical Society, the PIMA held its 33rd annual convention for the first time in the City of Iloilo on December 27- 30, 1935.

The name of the Philippine Islands Medical Association was changed to the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) in anticipation of the granting of independence to the Philippines by Americans. As the country's leading health care institution, the PMA has for its objectives the following: 1) to unify the nation's physicians for the advancement of medical science and practice; 2) to improve the people's health; and 3) to provide mutual aid and protection among members.

It was through the initiative of the PMA that the Bureau of Health and the University of the Philippines College of Medicine were created in 1905, and the Department of Health established in 1941.

The PMA gained the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) accreditation as the nationally organized professional organization of physicians on September 18, 1975. It co-founded the Confederation of Medical Association in Asia and Oceania (CMAAO) and the Medical Association of Southeast Asian Nations (MASEAN).

The PMA boasts of 26,000 active members, 105 component societies in 17. It has regions 8 specialty divisions and 30 specialty societies, with respective affiliates and sub-specialties under the 8 specialty divisions and other 59 affiliate societies.

GENERAL PROGRAM

May 23, 2001	- Registration
5 30 am	- **PMA-Enervon Prime Fun Run (PICC Grounds)**
1 00 - 6.00 pm	- **Bowling (Robinson's Ermita)**
7 00 pm	- **Welcome Reception (Union Bank)**
May 24	
8 00 - 10 30	- **Opening Ceremonies** Keynote Speaker Hon *Benjamin S. Abalos, Sr* Chairman, Metro Manila Development Authority Formal Opening of Exhibits: Hon. *Elvira S. N. Dayrit*
10:30 - 11:30	- **Plenary Session** Pain in the Rheumatic Diseases. Practical Aspects of Diagnosis and Treatment - *Sandra Tankeh-Torres, MD*
12:00 - 2:00	- **Luncheon Symposium** Quality Care for Management of Patients with Dyspepsia Speaker *Ma Elinore M Alba*
2:00 - 3:00	- **Philippine Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery** "Aesthetic Surgery" *Dr Rene Encarnacion*
2:00-4:00	- **Philippine Society of Endocrinology and Metabolism** Updates in Thyroid Management - *Elizabeth Paz Pacheco, M.D* Current Updates in Lipids Disorders - *Cynthia Halili Manabat* Redefining Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus Therapy - *Robert C Mirasol*
2:00 - 5.00	- **Department of Health** National Objectives for Health - *Lilibeth David, M.D.* Framework for the Health Sector Reform - *Bernardino Aldaba, M.D* Hospital System Reforms and the National Dev't. Plan - *Robert Enriquez, M.D.* Local Health Systems Dev't - *Regina C Sobrepeña, M.D* Public Health Program Dev't - *Eric Tayag M.D*
2:00 - 4:00	**Philippine Health Insurance Corporation** Overall Philhealth Updates - *Mr. Enrique M. Zalamea* Specific Updates on Accreditation - *Nela Tanio, M.D.* Specific Updates on Quality Assurance - *Madeleine Valera, M.D.* Specific Updates on Claims - *Ms. Melinda Mercado*
3:00 - 5:00	**Sports Medicine Association of the Philippines**
4:00 - 5:00	**Philippine Blood Coordinating Council** Transfusion Practice Myth or Science - *Linda T. Tamesis, M.D* *Ernesto D.J. Yuson, M.D.*
00pm	**Fellowship Night** "PMA Goes Caribbean" Guest: *Senator Juan M. Flavier, M.D*
May 25	
8 00 - 9 00	**Dental Care** - *Mariano Maglutac, M.D*
8 00 - 1 00	**Philippine Society of Anesthesiologists** Hospice Care - *Ma. Zenaida Mariano, M.D* Cancer Pain Management of General Practitioners- *Ma. Lourdes Cabaluna, M.D.* The Opioid Scare tolerance, addiction and overdose *Benjamin Daniel S. Valera, M.D.*
8:00 –10:00	**Philippine Academy of Rehabilitation Medicine** Arthritis Management More Than Just Pills - *Mary Jeanne O. Flordelis, M.D.* Falls in the Elderly - *Vania L. Yu, M.D*
9:00 - 5:00	**General Assembly**
9:00 - 10:00	**School Health Program** - *Edwin Bollastig, M.D.*
10:30 - 11 30	**Plenary Session** Use and Abuse of Pediatric Medications - *Genesis Rivera, M.D*
2:00- 2:00	**Luncheon Symposium** Improving the Level of Asthma Control - *Dr. Dina V. Diaz*
12:00 - 2:00	**Luncheon Symposium** Interal Nutrition in Pediatrics - *Felizardo N. Gatcheo, M.D*
2:00 - 3:00	**Peer Review** *Bu C Castro, M.D*
2:00 - 3.00	**Philippine College of Radiology** Imaging of Primary PTB - *Cecilia Villamor, M.D* CT Angiography – A New Concept - *Arthur Manuel, M.D.* CT Imaging of theSpine *Eugene C Dy, M.D*
2:00 - 5:00	**7th PMA-Glaxo Smithkline Residents Case Presentation Contest**
2:00 - 5:00	**Philippine Pediatric Society** Immunization Update Combination Vaccine - *Lester A. Deniega, M.D* Practical Pediatric Dermatology - *Ma. Victoria Dizon, M.D.* Recognizing Learning Disabilities in Children *Erminihilda L. Avendaño, M.D*
3:00 - 4:00	**Philippine Obstetrical and Gynecological Society** Child Birth Going Back to Nature - *Ricardo Gonzales, M.D*
4:00 - 5.00	Recent Court Decisions in Medical Jurisprudence *Atty. Leo O. Olarte, M.D*
7:00pm	**Alumni Night/ Free Night**
May 26	
9:00 - 10:00	**36th Dr. Jose P. Rizal Memorial Lecture** *Antonio C. Oposa - PMA Past President*
10:30 - 11:30	**Plenary Session** A New Look in the Management of AECB - *Joselito Chavez, M.D.*
12:00 - 2:00	**Luncheon Symposium** Philippine College of Physicians Update on Acute Coronary Syndrome - *Rogelio V. Tanco, M.D*
12:00 - 2:00	**Luncheon Symposium** An Improved Patient Relation Management - *Mr. Dieter Brueckner*
2:00 - 4:00	**Philippine Academy of Family Physicians** The Evolving Role of the Family Physicians Family Case Presentation of Dept. of Family and Community Medicine *-Ma. Lorena D. Lorenzo, M.D* Lifestyle Diseases Quality of Life Issues - *Ma. Antonia O. Yamamoto, M.D*
2:00 - 4:00	- **Philippine Society of Pathologists**
2:00 - 5:00	- **Pearls and Pitfall in the Use of Topical Steriods** - *Marita Lim Ke, M.D.* Dermatologic Emergency - *Daisy King Ismael M.D*
2:00 - 5:00	- **Philippine College of Surgeons** Interactive Panel Discussion on Breast Mass - *Rodney B. Dofitas, M.D.* Presenter *Annie Francisco, M.D.* *Prescilla B. Caguioa, M.D.* *Mark Richard Kho, M.D.* Panelist *Robert O. Domingo, M.D.* Moderator
2:00 - 5:00	- **Awarding Ceremonies**
6:00	- **Holy Mass:** Officiating Priest: Fr Rino Inopeña
7.00pm	- **Closing Ceremonies and Induction of Officers** Guest Speaker *Manuel M. Dayrit, M.D* Secretary, Department of Health

Dear Consumers,

The aging process is a condition that we have to prepare for, as well as delay, through proper nutrition and a healthy lifestyle. Aging accompanies cell degeneration that leads to heart diseases, memory loss and fractures. It affects the heart, the brain and the bones.

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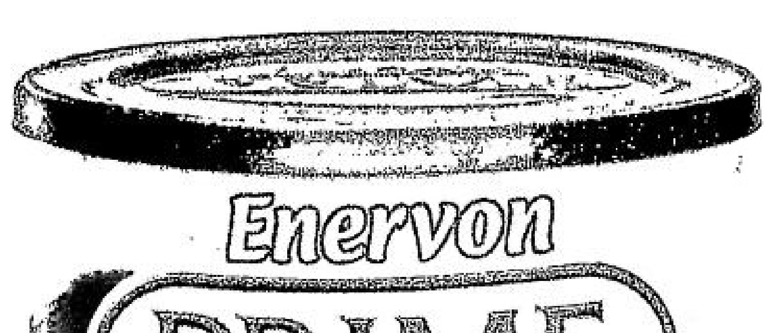
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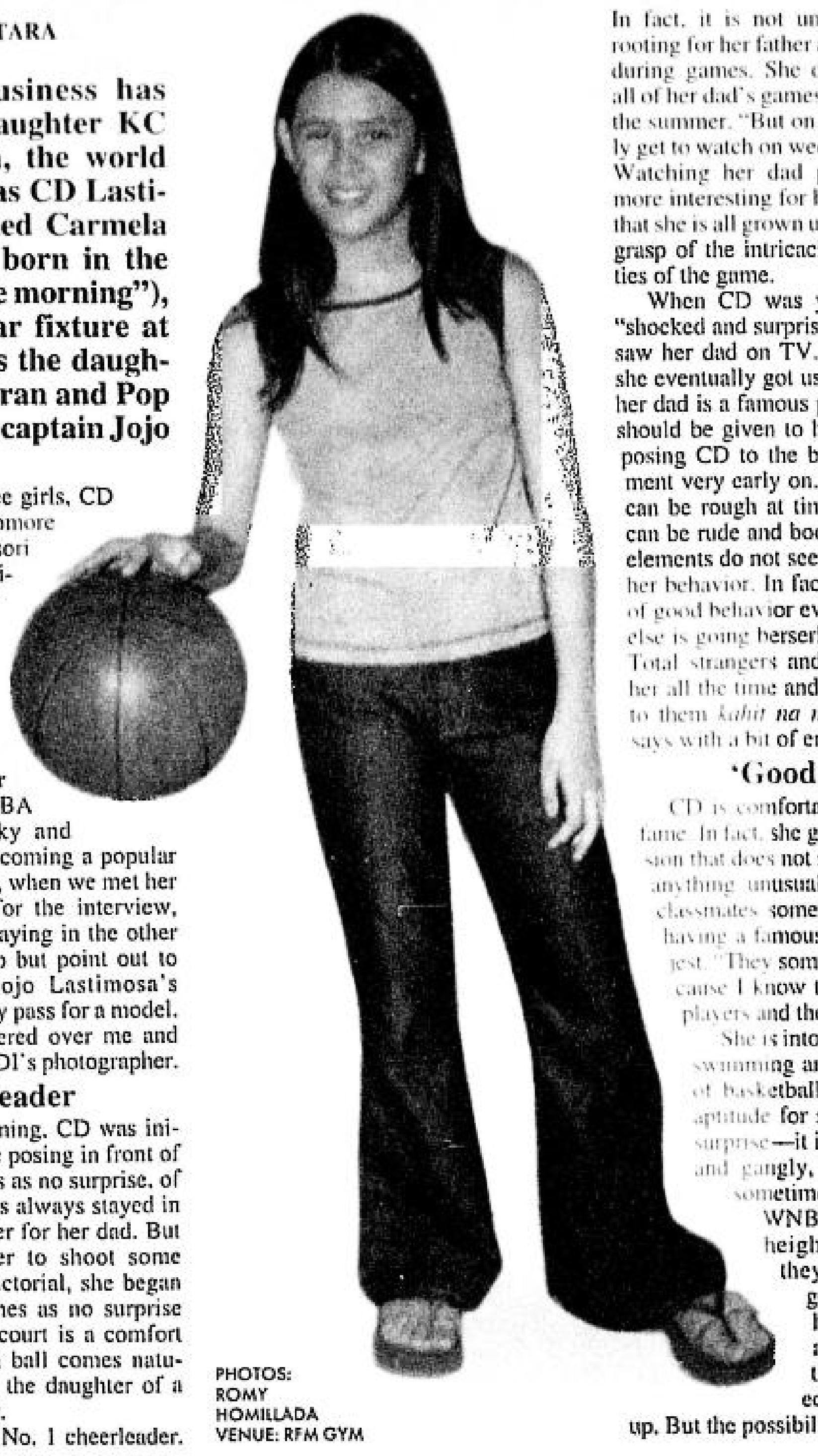
Like father, like daughter

By Jules Alcantara



PHOTOS: ROMY HOMILLADA
VENUE: RFM GYM

IF show business has celebrity daughter KC Concepcion, the world of basketball has CD Lastimosa. Christened Carmela Dawn ("I was born in the wee hours of the morning"), CD is a familiar fixture at the PBA. She is the daughter of PBA veteran and Pop Cola Panthers' captain Jojo Lastimosa.

The eldest of three girls, CD is an incoming sophomore at The Seed Montessori School in Quezon City. CD practically grew up on PBA bleachers for she has been avidly following her dad's games since she was barely a year old. She is a familiar sight especially to PBA fanatics. Tall, dusky and pretty, she is fast becoming a popular sports figure. In fact, when we met her at the RFM Gym for the interview, some of the guys playing in the other court could not help but point out to yours truly that Jojo Lastimosa's daughter could easily pass for a model. CD practically towered over me and Romy Homillada, PDI's photographer.

Cheerleader

Shy and unassuming, CD was initially uncomfortable posing in front of the camera. It comes as no surprise, of course, since she has always stayed in the sidelines to cheer for her dad. But when we asked her to shoot some hoops during the pictorial, she began to warm up. It comes as no surprise that the basketball court is a comfort zone and holding a ball comes naturally to her. She *is* the daughter of a basketball superstar.

CD is her dad's No. 1 cheerleader. In fact, it is not unusual to see CD rooting for her father and his teammates during games. She diligently watches all of her dad's games especially during the summer. "But on school days, I only get to watch on weekends," she adds. Watching her dad play has become more interesting for her especially now that she is all grown up and has a clearer grasp of the intricacies and complexities of the game.

When CD was younger, she was "shocked and surprised" when she first saw her dad on TV. But as she grew, she eventually got used to the idea that her dad is a famous personality. Credit should be given to her parents for exposing CD to the basketball environment very early on. Basketball games can be rough at times and the crowd can be rude and boorish. But all these elements do not seem to have affected her behavior. In fact, she is a paragon of good behavior even when everyone else is going berserk on the bleachers. Total strangers and fans come up to her all the time and talk to her. "I talk to them *kahit na nahihiya ako*," she says with a bit of embarrassment.

'Good form'

CD is comfortable with her dad's fame. In fact, she gives off the impression that does not see her dad's job as anything unusual. Her friends and classmates sometimes tease her for having a famous dad but it is all in jest. "They sometimes tease me because I know the other basketball players and their kids," she adds.

She is into playing volleyball, swimming and even a "little bit of basketball." An affinity and aptitude for sports comes as no surprise—it is in her genes. Tall and gangly, CD says her dad sometimes tells her to join WNBA because of her height. And whenever they shoot hoops together, Jolas says she has "good form" and even gives her tips on how to execute a shot or a layup. But the possibility of CD following her dad's footsteps as a professional basketball player is slim to none.

Still undecided on what course to take up in college, one thing is for sure at this point, she will not be playing for the girl's varsity basketball team. "My dad wants me to go to Ateneo or UP," CD says. Jolas once studied at Ateneo.

CD says if there is one thing she and her dad share, it is their love of music. So don't be surprised to see CD and Jolas tapping their fingers and humming the lines of the same song.

Heartthrob

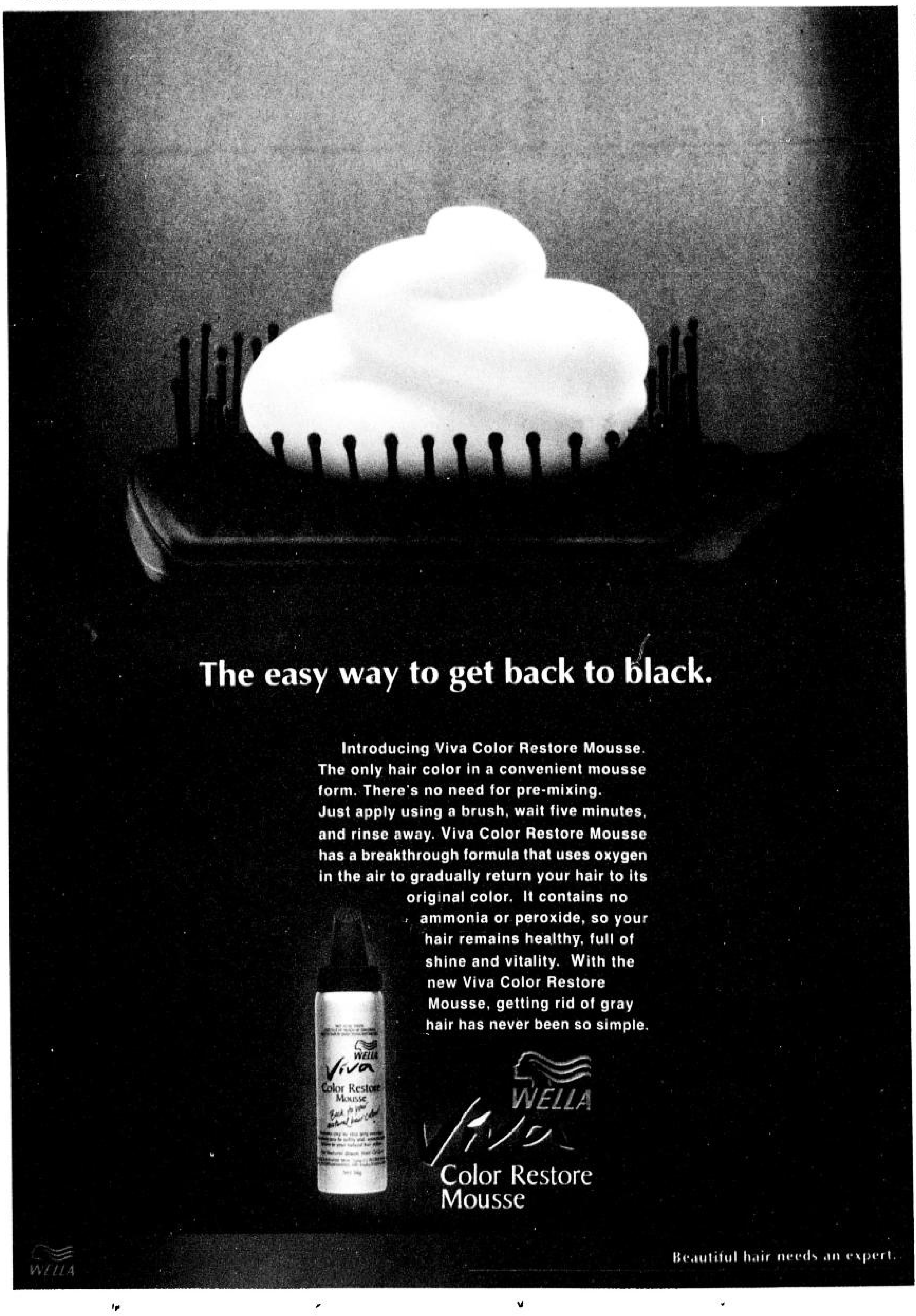
Now that she is a teenager, and texting has become a major preoccupation, her dad sometimes ribs her and jokingly asks her as to who she's busy sending messages to. Male callers are a no-no till she blows 16 candles on her birthday cake. And only when she is 18 years old will she be allowed to have a boyfriend. When asked as to how her dad will feel if she ends up having a basketball player for a boyfriend, she says her dad will probably "freak out."

CD says that her dad is a "bit strict" and now that she is older, it is but natural that she confides in her mom even more. But CD maintains that she is just as close to her dad as she is to her mom. In fact, upon closer observation, CD takes after her dad in a lot of ways. Not only do they look alike, they also share the same quiet and mysterious demeanor.

If Jolas were tasked to describe her, what would he say? "My dad will say I'm *masungit, suplada*," she answers with a grin. CD says she has little patience for her younger sisters who are precocious and playful. "And he always says I'm *sutil*!" she adds with a laugh.

Just like any teener or a rookie on the court, she is still a bit awkward, still not comfortable in her own skin. But CD will be a character to contend with in the future. She may not end up a superstar basketball player like her dad, but one thing is for sure—she will be a heartthrob, just like him.

It looks like the PBA superstar will have to do a different type of guarding in a different type of ballgame in the future.



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Chavit's kid chats up

HOW does it feel to have a controversial figure and a longtime politician for a dad?

"It's okay. Sometimes they tease me in school. Like, my friends tease me and call me '*jueteng* queen.' (Laughs) But it doesn't bother me. I know they're just joking," says Stephanie Singson, the pretty daughter of one of the country's most controversial public figures, Chavit Singson. An incoming senior at the International School, the pretty lass who looks so much like her father is the second of four girls. Steph (as she is fondly called) is a sports buff. She loves swimming, playing volleyball and most especially riding horses. In fact, up to the day her dad's horse died during a typhoon, Steph would ride a lot in their hometown Vigan.

Lucky charm

All of Chavit's children's names start with the letter R. Hence her first name is actually Roselle, but she prefers to be called Stephanie or Steph. "My nickname used to be Chiqui," she narrates. When she was born, her dad won a million in a cockfight. "They said I was their lucky charm, so they called me Chiqui, after the chicken," she grins.

By now everyone knows what triggered her dad to drop the exposé on the ex-President. "I think he already knew that there were people who were out to kill him," she says. It was a tough time for all of them—her dad was constantly calling her, telling all of them to stay home and cut down on activities that would entail going out of the house. Stephanie says their whole family was really worried and scared for her dad. "We thought he was going down and that no one would believe him," she recalls. In a show of solidarity and support, she and her siblings were present during the momentous press conference at Club Filipino. The exposé happened a week before her birthday and so her dad told her to cancel the planned party. But it was okay with her since it was quite difficult to think of celebrating at such an inopportune time.

Surprisingly, her dad is not as strict as others would automatically assume. "He used to be [strict]. Actually, he only has a few rules. Just come home early, no drinking, no smoking, no drugs and to take care of ourselves." In other words, Chavit is just like any other normal dad who wants what is best for his children. No extraordinary precautions such as having a battalion of bodyguards to follow her or her sisters around. They all want to lead as normal a life as possible.

It has worked to her advantage that she's studying at IS since several of its students are children of public figures. You can't walk around with a chip on your shoulders especially if you're constantly rubbing elbows with children of other prominent personalities. In fact, one of Erap's daughters, Jerika, was her schoolmate. Stephanie only has good words for the daughter of the man her dad helped topple. "We were friends. She would hang out with us during lunch. Then after the exposé, we still texted. But we lost touch because she kept switching phones," she shares.

Impeachment

Even when the impeachment procedures were ongoing, their worries and fears for their dad did not let up. But Stephanie and her sisters did not stop going to school. Just like everyone else, she was glued to TV and diligently followed the real-life soap opera. "It was really interesting. Like, Emma Lim used to be our guardian. And we were really close to her. We used to bug her and fight with her! (Laughs) We were like, 'Emma, you're going to testify?'," she narrates. Her friends and peers in school did not at all change their attitude toward her or her sisters during the entire impeachment proceedings. "In fact, they were very supportive," she adds, obviously grateful that nothing untoward happened to them at such a difficult time.

Stephanie says if there is one word her dad constantly uses to describe her, it is the word "*matapang*." It is this trait that sets her apart from her sisters. In fact, she is known for being overprotective of her sisters and her other half-siblings. "My dad says I should have been a boy," she shares.

Although her dad is based in Ilocos, they keep in touch all the time and gets to be with him as often as possible. "Sometimes I call him from school and ask him to pick me up, even if he's in a meeting. And he comes to pick me up," she enthuses and adds that her dad says she has a tendency to become demanding. One time, she bugged him to have the car pick her up and a friend in school. He ended up taking the hotel cab so she could use the car. "I really felt bad when I found out," she says ruefully. Are they spoiled? "No *naman*. He gives us everything we need but we're not spoiled. He wouldn't like that."

Maturity and wisdom

Stephanie exhibits maturity and wisdom well beyond her years especially when it comes to handling rumors about her dad. "We just ignore it. [If they say something] then that's their opinion," she says with a shrug. "The other day, while I was interviewing him for a school project, a TV station called to clarify a rumor linking him to Rica Peralejo and that they were seen in Boracay during the Holy Week. But my sister was with him the whole time and she didn't see her or anyone else for that matter," she says. Whatever rumor she hears, she goes straight to her dad for clarification.

When asked as to how her dad would describe her, Steph says he always says she is "smart, kind of demanding and pretty." She is quite embarrassed in saying the last word. Stephanie does not say it out loud but it was pretty obvious that she idolizes her dad. She describes him as "funny, street-smart, wise and, most especially, he's good with people."

Stephanie wants to become a lawyer and a journalist someday. It comes as no surprise that she is also interested in pursuing a career in politics. Apart from her dad, the brother of her mom was also a longtime mayor in the North. In fact, she has apprised her dad of her future political plans. "But of course I would have to live in Vigan and get to know the people. I can't just run for office just because of my family name!" she adds. "I told him 'Dad, when I finish school, I'll go back to Vigan and run against Manong Rommel (her half-brother, who won in the recent elections).' And he said, 'Okay, I'll wait for you!'" she says with a laugh.

Jules Alcantara

PHOTOS: JOAN BONDOC
VENUE: POOK LIGAYA RIDING STABLES, QC

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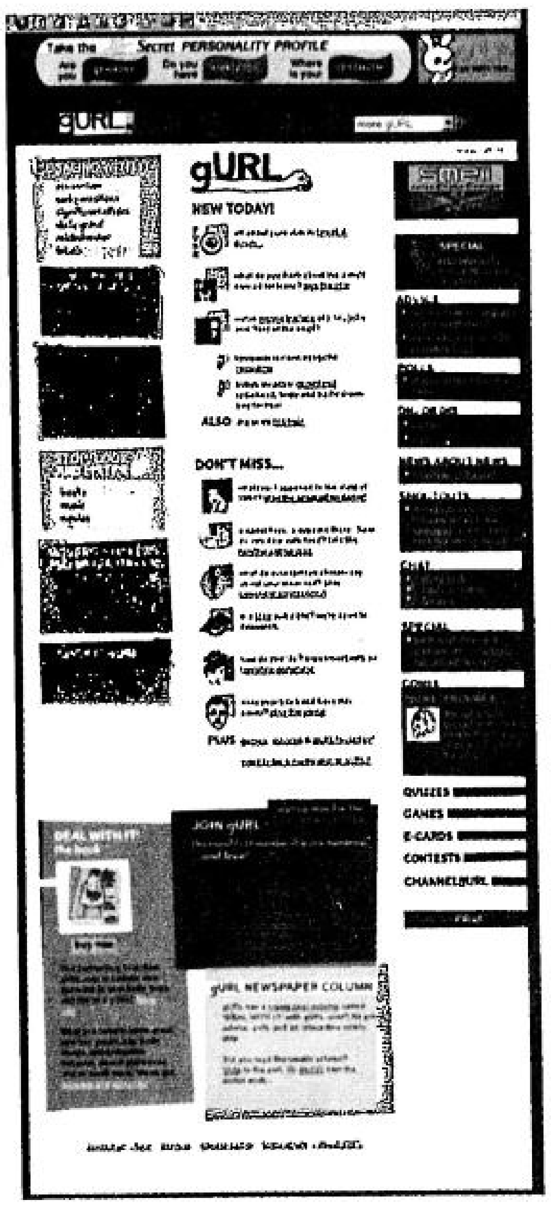
WEBSITE OF THE WEEK

This one's for you, girl

What does gurl.com have to offer? We asked a boy to check it out

BY GARY MERCADO



WHEN I was asked to look at gurl.com, I secretly hoped I wouldn't have to rave about a site that might not be there next week. Fortunately it looks like I won't have to.

Even before I've had the chance to look into it, the domain name gurl.com sounded like pure sugar. It takes a lot of money, luck or both to get a domain name like that. Later on I discovered they own gurls.com, too.

Inspired, I checked out both websites. Business at the cyber café where I was viewing it was slow, which was cool because it was easier to put on the brakes when I started to read "teen lolita lesbians." I didn't want to get kicked out.

Membership was a requirement, which was a dilemma since I was clearly not in its target market and I didn't want to stick out. So I signed up as "Chichi," a 17-year-old high school senior (hey, I couldn't think of anything better after an hour of CounterStrike).

Cool and cartoonish

The site strikes you with its design. It has a cool Dexter-like cartoonish feel to it, using the staid font Courier creatively. Feature-wise it covers all the bases. It's got free e-mail (gurlmail), online telegrams (gurlgrams) and free hosting (gurlpages—I wonder what'd happen if I upload my basketball homepage there. Hmmm...) as well as a host of other stuff. Notable is ChannelGurl, with gurlRadio, an Internet radio station; gurlWireless where girls receive SMS alerts, and even gurlVideo, featuring videos members send in. This week's special was from Carmela titled "WWF Protegee," where she says "The Rock saved my life. I used to be really depressed... Now I am aspiring to be a wrestler myself." Okay.

Don't get me wrong, the site is chock-full of great articles and interesting stuff. What really sets it apart is how it uses technology to get messages across. In an informative and non-preachy style, they use Shockwave games, polls, forms, discussion boards and contests to get girls' opinions together. And how! You're treated with so much eye-candy all the way you won't realize you're already participating. "Chichi" never had it so good as she checked the hair-style-generator, discussed boy issues on significant others and chatted up another member on her two-timing BF (drop him, girl!).

I ended up having a great time.

Check out www.gurl.com.

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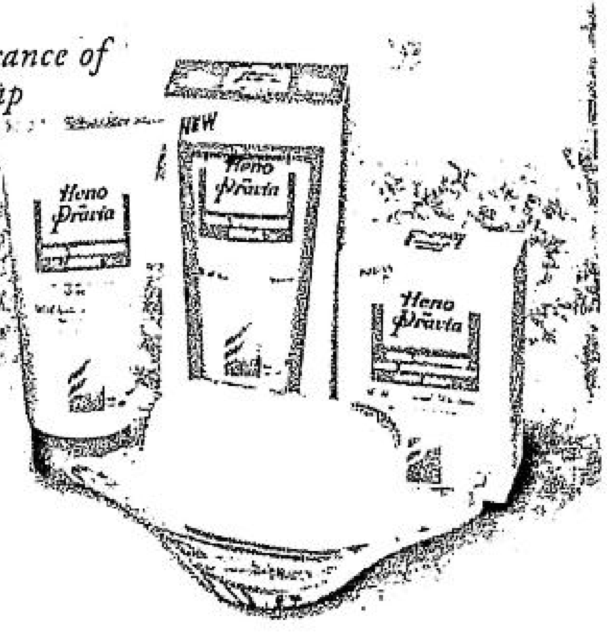

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Three girls, a guy and a slumber party

to be young • to be you • to be young • to be you!
2bU!

They've been nominated in the Best New Artist category in this year's MTV Awards, but right now their main concern is dunking into tub for a bubble bath

BY MAUI V. REYES
PHOTOS AND ART DIRECTION BY MIKE ALQUINTO

SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD Shemarah Fe Flatts is kicking some serious turtle butt. "*Malapit na ako kay* King Koopa!" she exclaims, pounding on the keys of the slim, purple Gameboy. Still decked in their pajamas, Lougee Basabas and Ernestina Jacinto crawl over to the side of her bed to take a peek at the tiny screen. Only 15-year-old Brennan Espartinez stays put and waves the girls to their business.

It seems like the usual scenario for a slumber party, what with beauty products sprawled all over the carpeted floor, pizza boxes piled at the foot of the bed and pillows flying everywhere every now and then. What sets this slumber party apart from the one you held last weekend is the group's having it at the Manila Galleria Suites, getting their hands sticky with PCX prods. And, well, they're nominated for Best New Artist in this year's MTV Philippine Video Music Awards. They have a knack for breaking into a song at any time of the day.

Kaya, composed of the four incredibly talented teens, is the brainchild of Ryan Cayabyab, Boy Abunda and Rudy Tee (of BMG Records). Looking for something new, fresh and totally different from all the sell-out acts, the three held auditions and chose the four powerhouses who exuded energy and talent. "[The name Kaya] has an international flavor to it," Lougee explains, as she starts putting green goop on her face. "It's a name that just sticks to your head, the kind you remember," adds Tin-Tin, who's got her own yellow goop. Of course, who could forget their debut single, "Oblivious," from their self-titled debut album, and its "girl wants guy" video? Rock band Ciudad even featured the band in their video!

Pizza arrives and the four dive into the box. It's beauty time! The girls grab different products and try them out, while Brennan turns on the tube and hums along to almost every video shown on TV. The girls gab about absolutely anything, before heading to the bathtub and dunking in six bubble bath containers in the water. They ask Brennan to create bubbles. "*Magkaka*-muscles *ako nito eh!*," he groans, as the girls look on and laugh.

And so goes 2bU!'s slumber party which was more than just girl talk with the sensational group Kaya.

When you guys first met, what were your first impressions of one another?

Shemarah: *Lahat sila mayabang para sa akin. Si* Tin-Tin, *parang mabait na suplada. Basta, ewan! Ganoon din kay* Lougee and *kay* Brennan, *mayabang.*

Tin-Tin: *Ako natuwa sa kanya* (points to Shemarah) *kasi mahilig ako sa* black.

S: *Oo, gusto niya mag-asawa ng* Negro!

T: *Si* Lougee, *mabait. Si* Brennan, *mukhang suplado.*

Lougee: *Ako*, first impression *ko kay* She, *nailang akong lapitan siya eh, kasi akala ko, nag-e-*English *siya!*

S: *Peke!!!*

L: *Tahimik lang talaga siya! Di ba* the first time *na inapproach kita, pa-*English *ba ako non! Parang,* "Hi, what's your name?" *ganyan. Tapos di niya ako kinakausap, ganoon lang siya ng ganoon* (starts nodding). *Si* Tin-Tin *naman, gandang-ganda ako sa kanya. Inisip ko, 'tanggap 'to, ang ganda-ganda niya!' Tapos* friendly *siya. Medyo akala ko* snob *si* Brennan. And… eager boy. (*laughs*).

B: *Kasi kung hindi ko kaano-ano, kung hindi ko naman kakilala, hindi ko kinakausap.* Shemarah, *akala ko lalaki.* (*laughter*) Joke *lang ha! Parang astig ang dating, eh. Naka-*dreadlocks *pa!*

L: Braids *kaya tawag diyan!*

B: *Eh, basta,* dreadlocks! *Tapos may* threads *pa sa* hair. *Si* Lougee, *palaging naka-makeup.*

L: *Wala kaya akong* makeup!

B: *Ano ka! Eh ang puti-puti mo non!*

L: *Wala akong* makeup *non! Wala akong* makeup *non, ano ba!*

Who writes songs in the group?

L: Me.

What inspires you?

(*Everyone starts teasing Lougee*).

L: Hmm…well, my friends.

S: *Mga…ka-ibigan.*

L: Special someone?

T: I write poems, but not really songs. *Walang* music.

B: *Ako, nakaka-ilan lang akong kanta, eh. Minsan lang ako nalalagay sa* mood. *Ayoko kasing magsulat kapag hindi ako* spiritually clean. *Paniwala ko, ayoko nung kanta ko na magkaroon ng* meaning *pag-*backmask *mo. Eh kung sumikat kunwari 'yung song, tapos may* meaning *pala pag-*backmask *mo, konsensiya ko pa 'yon.'*

***Masyado kang* paranoid! Okay, *maraming mga* showbands and girlbands *ngayon sa* music scene. Are you under any kind of pressure because of this?**

T: Not really. *Kasi* okay *din kung may* competition.

L: You're more challenged. *Doon ka makikilala ng tao. Gumawa ka ng sarili mong* style.

What do you want people to think of Kaya?

T: *Naiiba.*

L: Fun-loving

B: *Iba eh, parang, tatlong* girls, *tapos isang* guy, *parang* The Corrs!

L: Energetic, youthful

You're under Boy Abunda and Ryan Cayabyab. What does that feel like?

B: *Hindi nga kami makapaniwala eh, na napili kami tapos sila ang humahawak sa amin.*

T: *Sobrang* fortunate!

L: *Parang,* we're really honored to be handled by big people like Mr. Ryan Cayabyab and Mr. Boy Abunda.

B: And to be under BMG. Wow!

Paano nga ba kayo nag-audition?

B: *Meron kasing* ad, *tapos pumunta kami sa* studio *ni* Mr. Ryan Cayabyab, *tapos ang daming tao.* So *parang, ang dami-dami namin tapos pagod na 'yung mga tao, nakatingin na lang, 'yung iba* bored *na.*

S: *Sumayaw kami.*

L: *Nag-*prepare *kami ng* three songs, one English, fast and Tagalog. *Tapos binigyan kami ng* one piece of paper after the first audition, *na parang,* "Come back on Thursday, wear a dress."

Anong mga kinanta ninyo?

S: *Nakalimutan ko na, eh.*

T: *Ako 'yung* "Together Again!"

L: "Dance with Me."

B: *Akala ko* Jessa Zaragosa. (*laughter*) *Ako,* "Something Inside."

***Meron ba kayong mga* "best moments" as a band?**

(*They get all excited.*)

S: *Ay, 'yung kay* Tin-Tin! (*laughter*)

B: *Kasi nandoon kami sa* UP. *May* gig *kami sa* Bahay ng Alumni, *tapos dumaan kami doon sa parang* grass *na* part. *Eh maraming mga makahiya. Naaliw si* Tin-Tin, *eh di apak siya ng apak para sumara lahat.* (*laughter*)

L: *Eh kakain na kami non.*

B: Pasta *pa kinakain namin non. Tapos parang may amoy… eh di ako naman sabi ko baka 'yung pagkain lang 'yon.*

S: *Basta ang lakas ng amoy. Tapos pagtingin ni* Tin-Tin *sa sapatos niya…*(*laughter*)

L: *Ang nakakatawa si* Tin-Tin *pa nagsabi,* "Mr.

THREE/ p.D2

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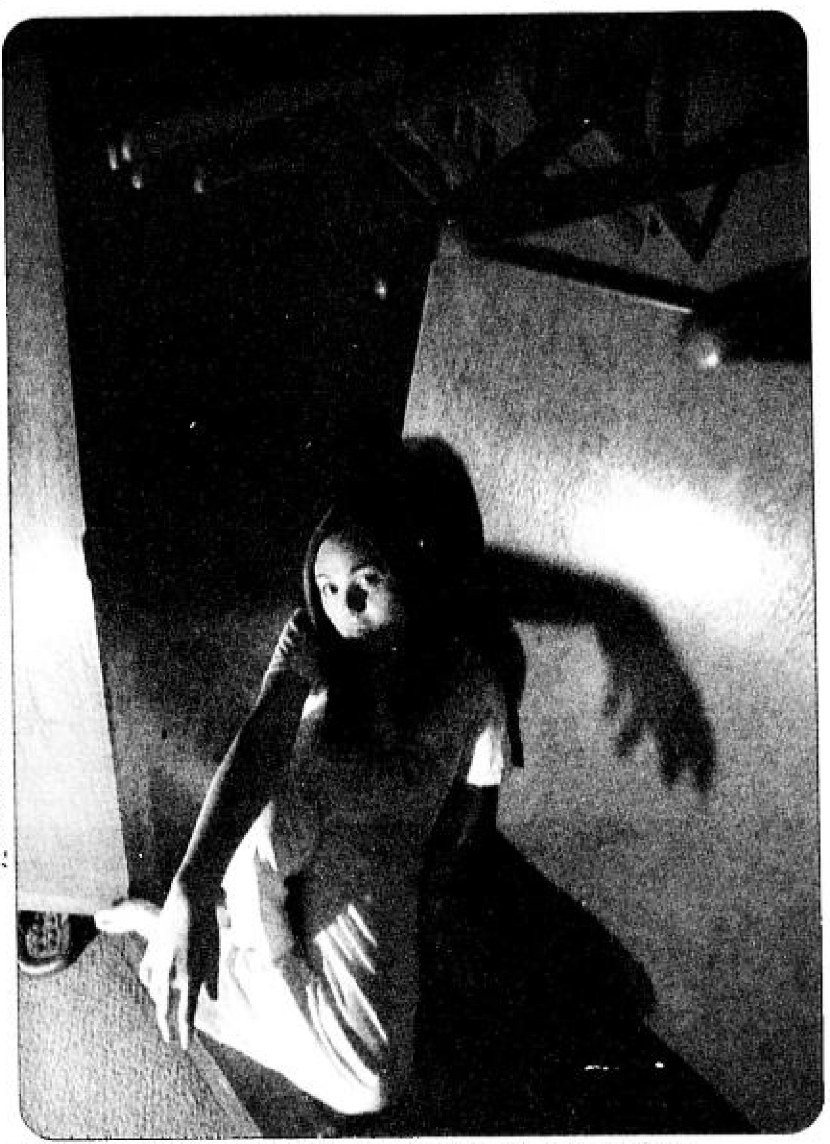
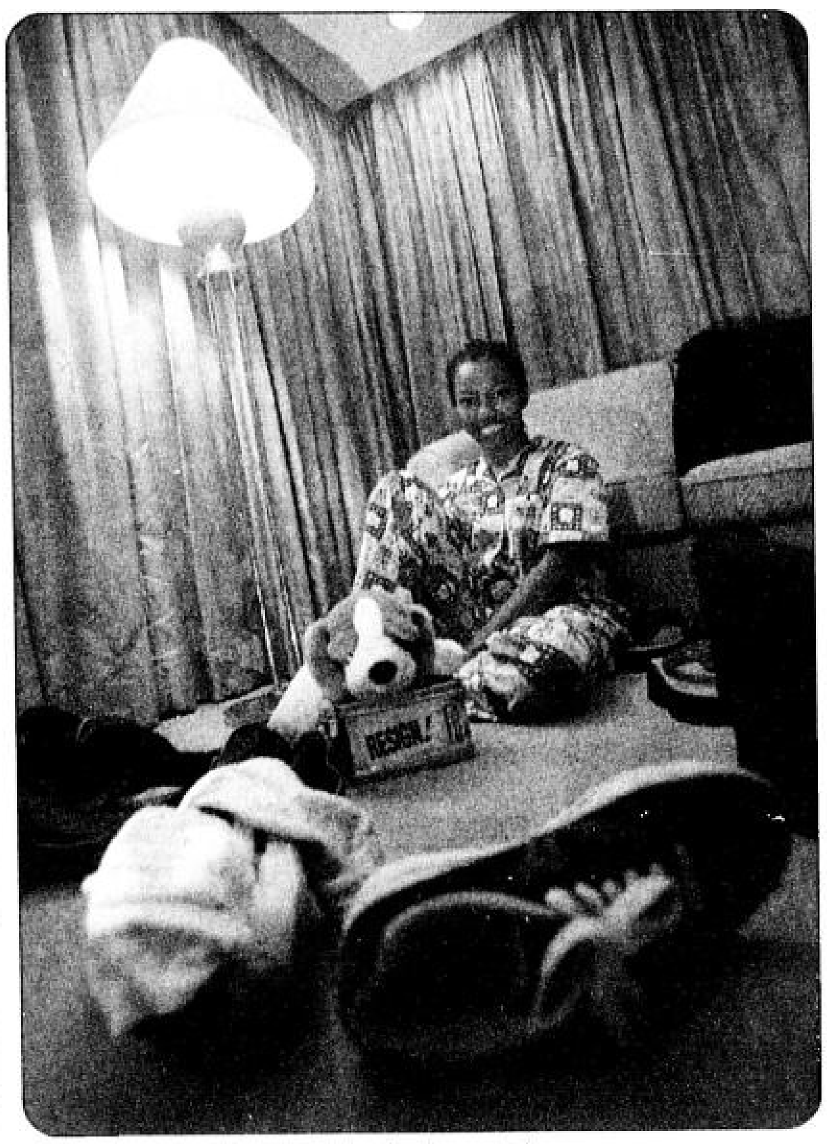
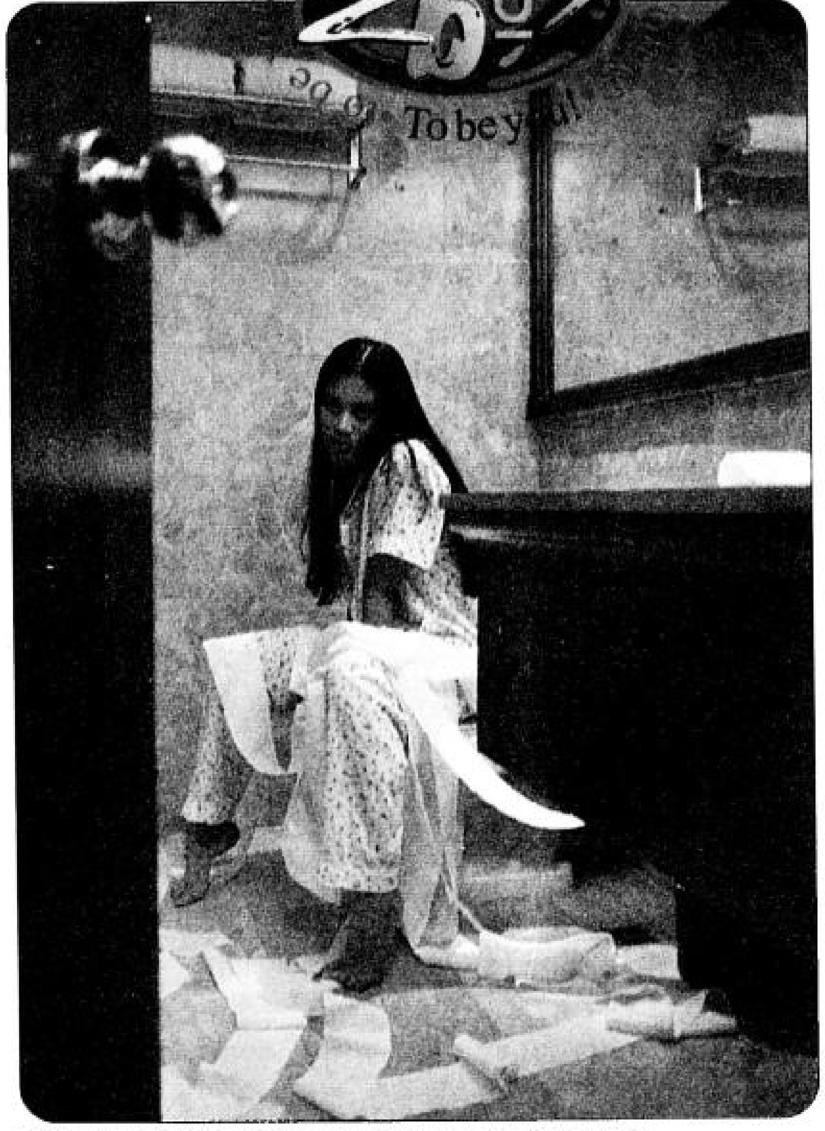


"I SEE DEAD PEOPLE." Tin-tin braves the closet monsters.



SHOESTRINGS and puppy love for Shemarah



"OOOPS, I DID IT AGAIN..." Lougee's been a baaad girl.

Three girls, a guy and a slumber party

(From page D1)

C, *ang baho, no?" Tapos paglabas namin, nagkakaskas ng sapatos. Ay, si* Brennan... *nung* one time, *kumakanta kami, tapos nadapa 'to, nag-*split *para kunwari sadya.*

B: *Eh, kasi sabi nila 'wag lumapit don sa* monitor *sa may* stage, *eh di tumalon ako. Pasikat naman ako, nadulas ako.*

L: *Pasikat pa siya para hindi mahalata. Hindi na kami makakanta non, tawa kami ng tawa, sobra! (laughter) Tapos tumingin pa siya sa amin tapos sabi niya, "Ay, nadapa ako!" (laughter) Ay, si* Tin-Tin!, *nasa* Star City *kami*, Christmas show *'non*, so *nambabato kami ng mga* Christmas giveaways.

T: *Ang lakas kasi eh! (laughs) Nagbabato ako don sa likod, eh 'yung mga tao sa harapan ang kukulit, nanggigil ako kasi parang, "Ako naman!" Binato ko, tapos parang nag-*bounce, *tinamaan ako sa ulo!*

Brennan, *ikaw lang ang lalaki sa* group. Do you feel left out sometimes?

B: *Palagi! (puts on a serious face, while everyone laughs) Hindi naman masyadong inaapi. Minsan nakakainis, kasi ako lang 'yung* guy. *Eh sa bahay* Tatay *ko lang 'yung* guy, *eh sawang-sawa na akong makitang siya lang. (laughter)*

L: *Minsan nag-usap-usap kami, tapos sisingit siya, parang "Ano yon?" Tapos kami, parang, (puts her hand up and rolls her eyes)* "It's a girl thing." *(laughter)*

B: *Parang gusto ko nang maging* girl *dahil sa inyo eh! (laughter)*

***Eh di ba sa video ninyo, ikaw ang hinahabol nilang* boy?**

B: Yeah, *pero ayoko sa kanila. Hindi sila maganda para sa akin. (girls look at him and roll their eyes).* Joke! *Ano ba, kayo nga ang pinakamagandang mga babaeng kilala ko eh!*

T: *Mamaya baka singilin mo kami niyan ha!*

B: *Anong gusto ninyo, panget?! (Lougee pretends to hit him with her elbow)*

If you could record a duet with anyone, who would it be?

T: Martin Nievera. Enjoy *'yon! Magaling siyang kumanta! Si* Regine!

S: *Si* Lani Misalucha.

B: Gary V. *kasi* songs *niya may* different style. *Don sa* "Interactive" *na* album, *ibang-iba ang* songs *niya don. Maraming* inspirational songs. *Sa* performance *din niya.* Of course, 'N Sync *din!*

L: *Si* Chito Miranda *ng* Parokya ni Edgar. *Sa* girl *si* Christina Aguilera? *(laughs)*

B: Jessa Zaragosa? *(laughter)*

L: *Si* Rufa Mae. *Para* comedy!

T: *Oo nga, masaya!*

Boyfriends?

S: *Asawa meron. (laughter) Wala.*

Girlfriend?

B: Still searching. *Pero bawal pa eh. Parang wala pa akong* interest *don. Puro* anime *pa ako ngayon eh. Eh di kung may* girlfriend *ako, parang... (pretends to hit someone with super powers).*

What do you look for in a guy then?

L: Four M. *Matandang mayamang madaling mamatay! (laughter)* Joke *lang ha!*

S: *Ako? 'Yung kaya akong buhayin.*

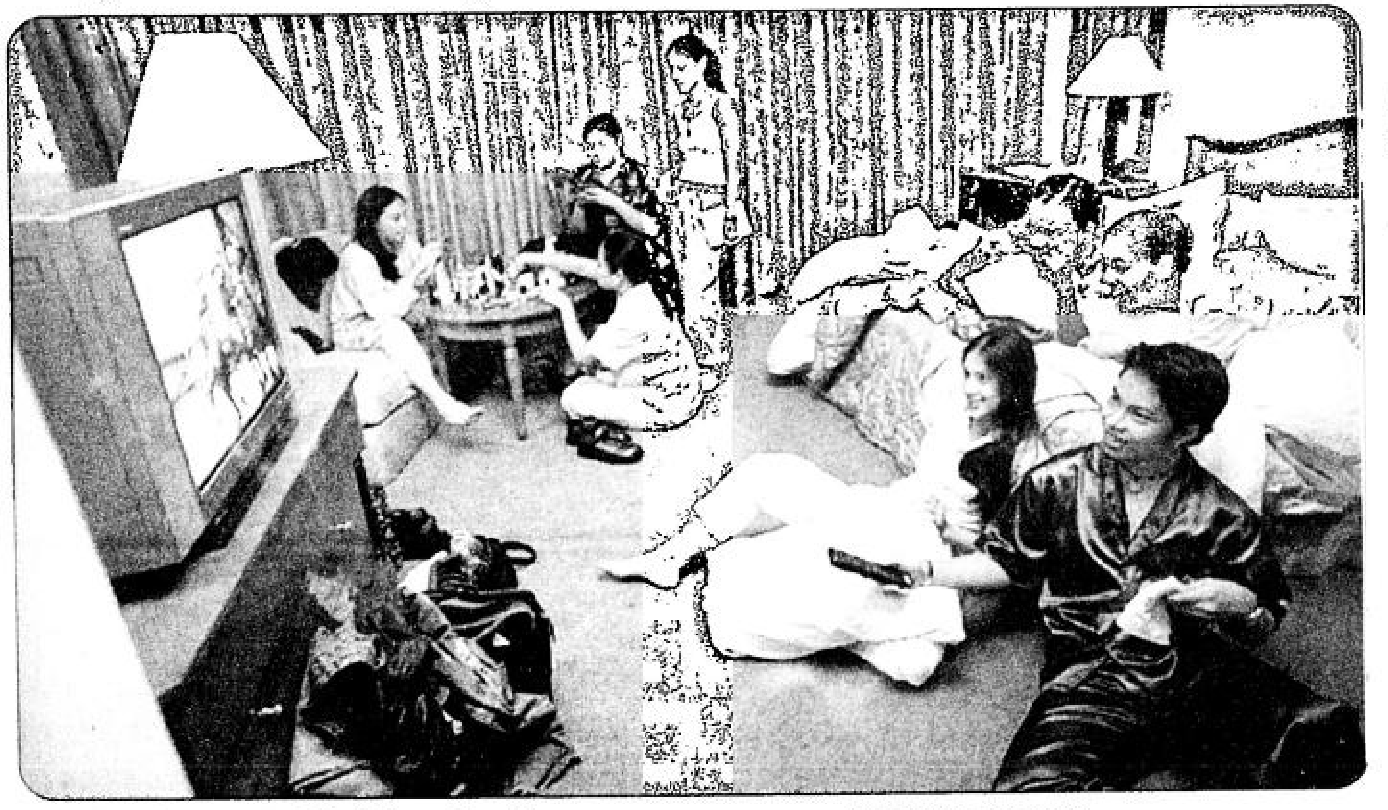
L: *Ganon? Eh di* four M *nga! (laughter)*

S: *Hindi naman importante ang pera eh!*

T: *Eh di mahirap.*

S: *Ano ba! (throws a pillow at her) Ayoko na! Si* Tin-Tin *kasi eh! Ayoko 'yung mga* guys *na isa lang 'yung hanap. May mga* friends *kasi akong nangyari na sa kanila...*so *ayoko ng gan'on.*

T: *Gusto ko 'yung nakakasundo ko. Gusto ko kengkoy, 'yung nakakatuwa. Nakakatawa sa lahat ng bagay. Pero* serious when needed.



L: *Ako talaga*, honestly, 20 and above. *Gusto ko 'yung 'feeling na siyang nag-*hahandle *ng* relationship, *tapos ako 'yung bine-*baby *niya. Gusto ko 'yung pina-*pamper...

B: *Pinapalitan ng* diaper?

L: *'Yung ini-*spoil *niya. Tapos gusto ko 'yung may* sense of humor *pero* can be serious at times. *Gusto ko 'yung* very thoughtful, *hindi lang sa akin, pati sa* family and friends *ko. 'Yon lang po*, thank you.

B: *Ah, ako?* In a guy? *(laughs)*

L: *Malaking* muscle! *(laughter)*

B: [What I look for in a girl], *di naman kailangang* sexy. *Dapat magandang* background *niya.* Conservative, *kengkoy. Kasi kung hindi siya kengkoy, kung magpapatawa ako, nakatingin lang siya.* Thoughtful, sweet.

L: *Hanap ka ng mababaw ang kaligayahan para matuwa sa 'yo.*

T: *(laughs) Wala kang gagawin, tawa na siya nang tawa!*

What turns you off?

L: *Ito talaga* turn-off ko—*mga konyo. Gusto ko mga* down-to-earth *na* guys, very natural guys.

S: *Ano, mayaman pero hindi konyo?*

T: *'Yan na naman eh! (laughter)*

L: *Hindi naman ako tumitingin sa mga* status, *eh, lahat ng tao ina-*accept *ko!*

T: *(laughs) Gano'n?! Lahat ng tao ina-*accept *mo, kahit 'yung mga lumiligaw sa 'yo?*

S: *Uy, ano na 'yan? (laughter)*

L: *Hindi! Ano ba! Ako hindi ako namimili ng tao sa* status, *sa* looks, or material things. I look at the attitude, *tapos 'yung paano makisama. Ayoko talaga ng mga konyo, sobrang* turn-off!

T: *Ako* turn-off *ko lang talaga 'yung hindi* neat. *'Yon lang.* Biggest turn-off *sa lahat.*

S: *Gusto ko magaling magluto. Ayaw ko sa mga... alam mo 'yung parang, naglalakad tapos...*yuck!

L: *Ayaw mo sa* PDI...public display of intimacy.

S: *Ayaw ko naman 'yung mga kung saan-saan na lang, gano'n!*

B: *Ayoko sa mga* girls *na umiinom, mga naninigarilyo.* Well, *depende na rin kung talagang mahal ko siya.*

L: So *ayaw mo 'yung may* vices, *bisyo?*

> Whether they win or lose at the MTV Awards, there is so much Kaya can look forward to

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Celebrity crushes?

B: Janet McBride.

L: Chito Miranda. *Kasi may* motorcycle *siya, eh. (laughter) Isipin mo siyang naka-*Harley! *(laughter) Hindi...wala naman siyang* Harley, *eh.*

T: *Pero nakakatawang isipin!*

L: And *si* Keanu Reeves.

B: *Ako,* Alicia Silverstone.

L: Diether Ocampo.

S: *Talaga?!*

T: Paolo Contis.

All: *Aaaaw.*

T: *Si* Badong. *(laughter)*

S: *Wala. Si* Craig David *lang.*

All: Let's set you up with Paolo!

T: Aaaah! *(buries her face in a pillow) May* girlfriend *na siya, eh. (pouts)*

Outgoing *ba kayo* or more of a homebody?

S: Outgoing! *Kasama ko tropa ko!*

B: Homebody. Since *bata pa ako, sa bahay lang ako.* TV, *tulog, kain. Medyo lumalabas-labas na ako ngayon.*

L: *Ako, pag walang pera,* homebody. *'Pag may konting datung,* outgoing! *(laughter) Sa tapat lang ako ng bahay. (laughs) Minsan,* mall, billiards.

T: *Ako* homebody. *Pero 'pag lumalabas ako, kasama ko ang mga pinsan ko. Mga* friends *ko, barkada. Punta kaming* Punchline.

What's the best way to hang out with friends? Movie?

S: *Sa bahay lang! Masaya na 'yon!*

L: *Kami mga* cheap thrills *talaga eh!* Like, *bili lang kayo ng isaw*, dirty ice cream, fish balls.

B: *Ako kasi* never *nagka-*chance *na magkaroon ng* friends so *labas, kahit na mga kapitbahay. Ako kasi 'yung mga* friends *ko nasa* Batangas, Parañaque. *Paano ko naman sila pupuntahan, ang layo! Tapos hindi ako pwedeng pumuntang mag-isa lang.*

Baby *ka talaga!*

B: *Talaga! Pagpinapawisan na ako,* Tatay *ko, ayan, pupunasan ako.*

S: *At higit sa lahat...*

L and T: *Pinapalitan ng* T-shirt! *Yay!!! (laughter)*

Beauty must-haves?

T: Mask. *(laughter)*

B: Cetaphil.

L: *Ako talaga dati, ang dami kong kaartehan. Maglalagay ako ng* egg *sa mukha,* oatmeal, *mga gano'n. Pero nakakatamad na rin minsan.* Lip gloss, powder, suklay.

S: *Ako pwede* lip-gloss *lang.*

B: *Ako* must-have, *di ako lumalabas ng bahay na di ko dala* 'N Sync album *ko!*

Britney or Christina?

B, L and S: Christina!

T: Britney.

S and L: *(screams at Tin-Tin)* Christina!

T: *Eh, si* Britney *nga gusto ko, eh!!!*

B: *Sa* performance, *si* Britney. *Sa* voice, *si* Christina. *Si* Christina *nga lang, ang daming* ad-lib *eh.*

L: *Tapos 'yung pagkaka-*repackage *ni* Christina *ngayon, ang* untidy *niya tingnan.*

B: *Baka hindi lang nakakaligo. (laughter)*

L: *Oo nga,* busy *siya masyado.*

You're also in Ciudad's new video, "Radio Guy." Any other video you wish you were in?

B: South Border.

S: *Ako din! Ang bait-bait nila* Luke, *eh!*

L: *Ako sa* video *ng* "Halaga." *Doon sa* beach. *Ako 'yung sirena na mahahanap nila sa* beach. *Tapos iuuwi na nila ako. Tapos iihawin ako sa bahay.*

T: *Pwede bang kay* Craig David? *Ako 'yung* girl *sa* "Seven Days." *(laughter)*

S: Craig David and South Border.

T: *Ang* sexy *kasi ni* Craig David, *eh!*

S: *Ako, ako 'yung* sexy, *ako 'yung nasa* video, *di ba?! (laughter)*

L: "Thong Song."

B: *Kaya mo?! Kaya mong naka-*thong?! *(Lougee slowly shakes her head.)*

S: *Sige nga,* dare, thong *ka ngayon!*

T: Or *pwede din* back-up dancer *ni* Janet Jackson.

L: *Ako gusto ko* Slapshock *maka-*jam *ko. (pretends to scream into a microphone).* Parokya ni Edgar.

Any unusual sleeping habits?

L: *Ako, 'pag nananaginip, nagsasalita.*

S: *Dapat sabihin mo sa* Nanay *mo kung nagsasalita ka, para magsabi ka ng* number, *manalo ka sa* lotto. *(laughter)*

B: *Ako gumagalaw paa ko.*

Brennan turned the TV back on and it was a Backstreet Boys video. He's clearly into 'N Sync and he started bickering with 2bU! correspondent Tammy David on who's the better boy band. "*Ay, basta,* 'N Sync *pa rin ako!*" he declares, sitting up on the bed. The conversation moves on to their VMA nomination.

"Feeling *ko hindi kami mananalo,*" Brennan shares.

"*Kung manalo kami, ibibigay namin 'yung* trophy *kay* Mr. C and Mr. Abunda," Tin-Tin shares. "*Kung manalo,*" Brennan interjects. Everyone's silent for a few seconds, then, out of nowhere, four voices blend into a harmony that drowned the Backstreet Boys' voices. Kaya started singing along with the TV, then broke into one of their own songs, "We Can Start By Falling In Love." The whole room was silent, then the four broke into giggles and buried their faces in the pillows.

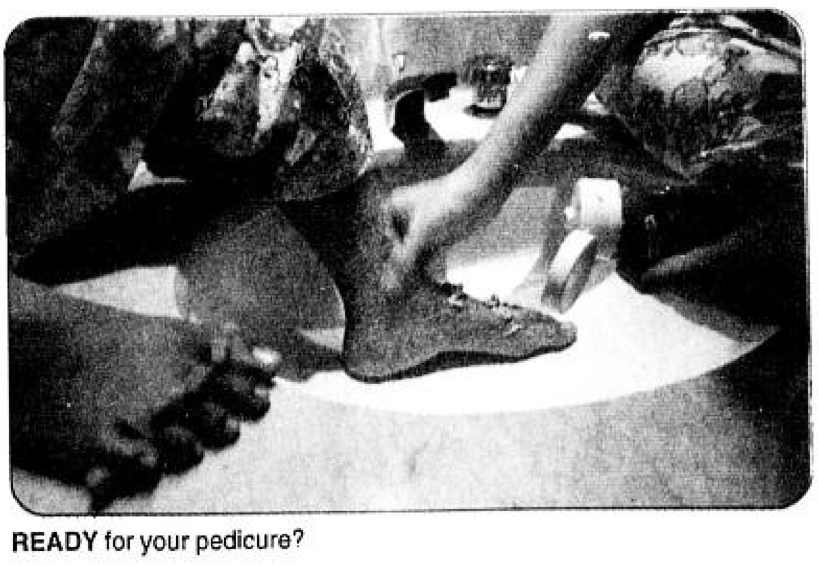
Win or lose, who cares? These four have so much more waiting for them, ready to kick more than just Koopa butt when it comes to the music scene. They start flipping channels, commenting on Britney Spears' latest video and chow down on some chocolates.

Yup, it's not your average slumber party.

Kaya's self-debut album under BMG Records is now out.

BRENNAN suds it up.

MASKED beauties



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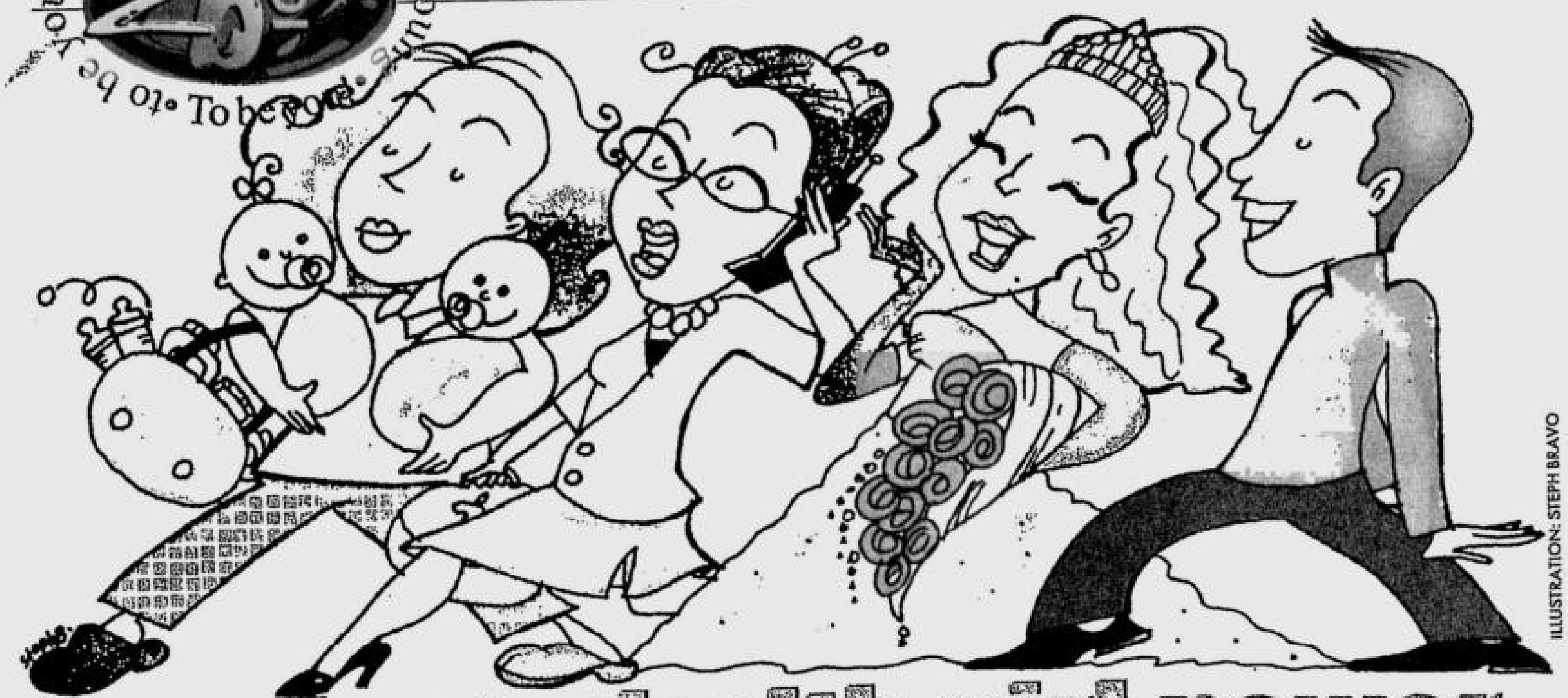

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Fascinated with girl power

By Blue Arden

I DON'T menstruate every month. I will never get pregnant, however rigorous sex may get. There's a very slim chance that I'd get raped, even if I try dressing up provocatively (not that I wish it'll happen). If I play my cards right, I'm less susceptible to discrimination, especially at the workplace. My parents aren't worried about my getting home late and I'm not forced to snag a date during prom night.

So, I have a stick, an extra appendage. For men, it not only becomes a literally powerful tool, a mean biological machinery, but also an ego-boosting way of soaring into this jungle called "life."

Men can supposedly get what they want whenever and wherever they want it. There was even a time when parents would kill just to have a son instead of a daughter. But all that is almost over, what with the "girl power" and "women equality" vibe in every music artist's vocabulary (excluding women activists). Now, men and women can almost get equal opportunities.

Which brings me to my point: I don't want my stick.

Sure, I recognize the power that lies within me (and in *it*). But I can't help being gay. To quote from "The Crying Game," "It's my nature." And even though I am pretty much contented with how I am built, I can't help but think of how easy life would have been for me if I were simply female.

Okay, I'd get my monthly period, so what? More than half of the population has it anyway. I'd wail and stretch my vocal chords to limits as I deliver my child, but it's supposed to be all worth it, right, mothers? I'm in danger of the sex-starved mongrels waiting in dark alleys, but I can always be extra careful. In other words, I'm willing to handle all that is not nice about being a woman, if only I could choose.

Actually, I'm even more fascinated by the power that women yield. If men hold the power in almost all things, then it is the women who hold power over men. Women can twist them around their fingers, pretending to be weaklings but with devious schemes at the back of their minds. They can catapult to success using a man, not that they need one to do so. Okay, I'm pushing it a bit far; blame it on those overly dramatic movies where the heroine sleeps, eats, talks her way using men to achieve major stardom, but anyway...

The simple things in a woman's life are what I'm actually more fascinated about. In particular, a man's wardrobe is such a drab. A girl's wardrobe, meanwhile, works under the rule that the closet has to be filled up to explosive proportions. She can change her look as often as she wants. She's not stuck with jeans and shirts.

As a kid, I've always enjoyed dressing up toys, particularly dolls. One time I asked my mom to buy me a stuffed toy. It's a doll, but it's a cute little boy doll. A week later, it wasn't only blushing with makeup; it also got a red cap and a blue jumper. And so it's frustrating for me now that I can't be that boy who can improve his looks with the use of cosmetics and through the help of a stylist.

I also like observing a beautiful woman. The way she walks gracefully even in a hurry, the way she twirls her hair unconsciously, her smile... Wait, why am I beginning to sound like a guy in love? Well, it is easy to fall in love with a woman, but it's easier for me to fall in love with a guy.

In truth, the reason I'd be better off as a woman is men. Love, especially in our culture, is easier shared between a man and a woman. I could just enumerate the number of loves lost paired with the phrase, "If only you were..." as an ending to our romantic engagement.

Also, my passive disposition is just not appropriate for a guy like me. Men have to be aggressive—they're the ones who court, deliver pick-up lines, set up dates and initiate sex. I never want to run after anyone, pacify a person's anger or do favors when I don't feel like it. Those are some of the boyfriend duties that I know of and I don't want to be anyone's boyfriend (in that sense, I mean).

But a guy like me has to live with what he has. I'm decided on sticking it out for the rest of my life (no puns here) with what I have. I have no fantasy of getting an operation and becoming a "changed" person. I've resigned to the idea that at least I can sit with my legs wide open, burp loudly, dress sloppily and keep an unkempt hair. And, oh, I can be with girls without my knees shaking wildly.

But how I wish that when I get married, I could have my last name changed... to Sabato.

E-mail the author at blue_arden@hotmail.com

If you are 40 yrs. and above
With rough, dry, wrinkled & mature skin
Well, cheer up! There is a better way to delay signs of aging. Bioessence Facial Center offers the best solution highly recommended for a finer, smoother and younger-looking skin with the use of a highly effective anti-aging serum. Infused by laser that dilates blood vessels and increases oxygeneration of the skin, thus promoting renewal of skin cells.

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A Skin Moisturizing and Anti-aging Treatment
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S450
BUBBLE JET PRINTER

S STANDS FOR SERIOUS STRENGTH
Sheer strength is the essence of the new S450, the rock-solid office-quality Bubble Jet printer from Canon. Designed for heavy-duty business use, the S450 features Canon's Drop Modulation Technology enabling high speed printing without compromising on quality – just what you need when deadlines are looming. We've even redesigned the inks to give you a more professional image: black pigment ink for sharper, clearer text reproduction with razor sharp outline; strong brilliant colours for vivid colour reproduction; and improved water resistance, to reduce smudging. And like all Canon S-series printers, the S450 is reliable, quiet and remarkably cost-effective thanks to Think Tanks™ technology, individually replaceable ink tanks with real-time ink level detection. You'll never run out of ink mid-print, and you'll never have to throw away another drop of ink – better for your pocket and better for the environment.
The new S450 from Canon. Strength is in its nature.
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Canon
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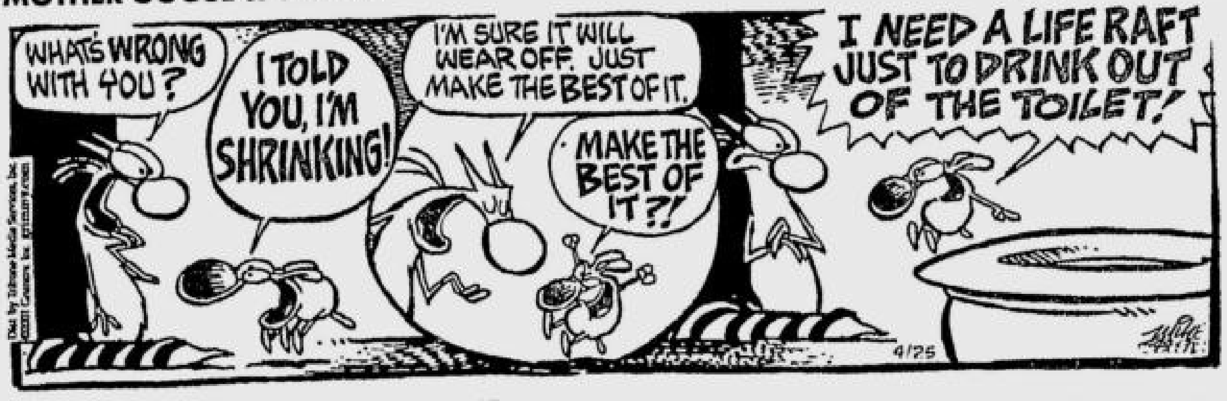
ComicRelief

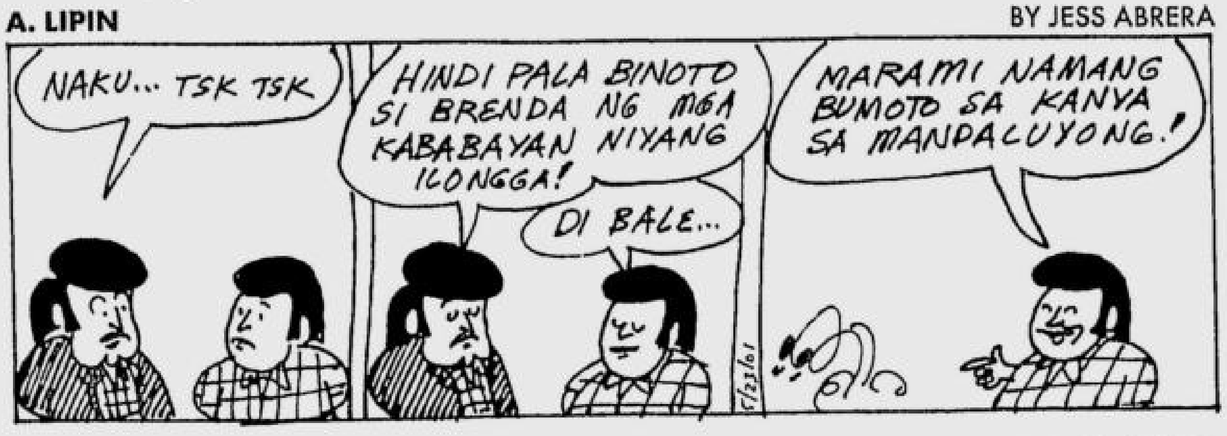
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?
I TOLD YOU, I'M SHRINKING!
I'M SURE IT WILL WEAR OFF. JUST MAKE THE BEST OF IT.
MAKE THE BEST OF IT?!
I NEED A LIFE RAFT JUST TO DRINK OUT OF THE TOILET!
4/25

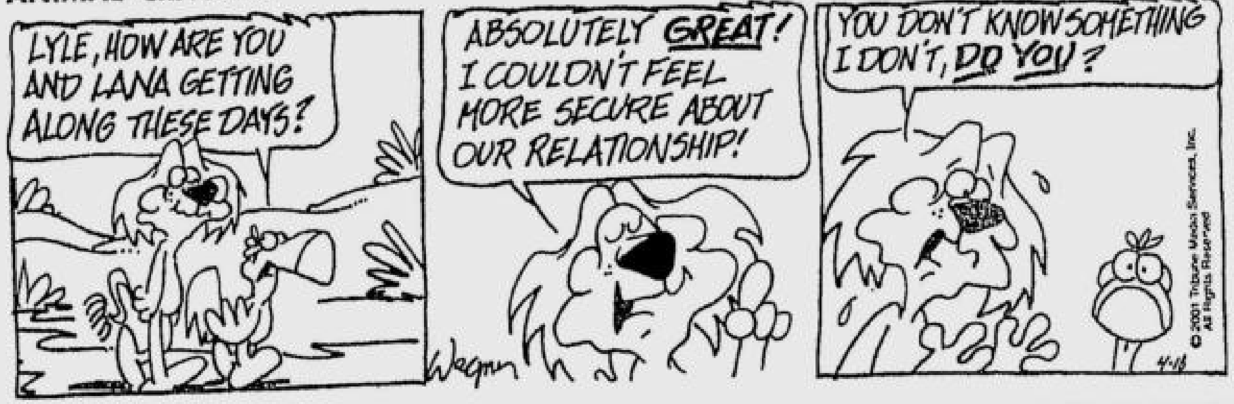
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NAKU... TSK TSK
HINDI PALA BINOTO SI BRENDA NG MGA KABABAYAN NIYANG ILONGGA!
DI BALE...
MARAMI NAMANG BUMOTO SA KANYA SA MANDALUYONG.!
5/23/01

ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


LYLE, HOW ARE YOU AND LANA GETTING ALONG THESE DAYS?
ABSOLUTELY GREAT! I COULDN'T FEEL MORE SECURE ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIP!
YOU DON'T KNOW SOMETHING I DON'T, DO YOU?
Wagner
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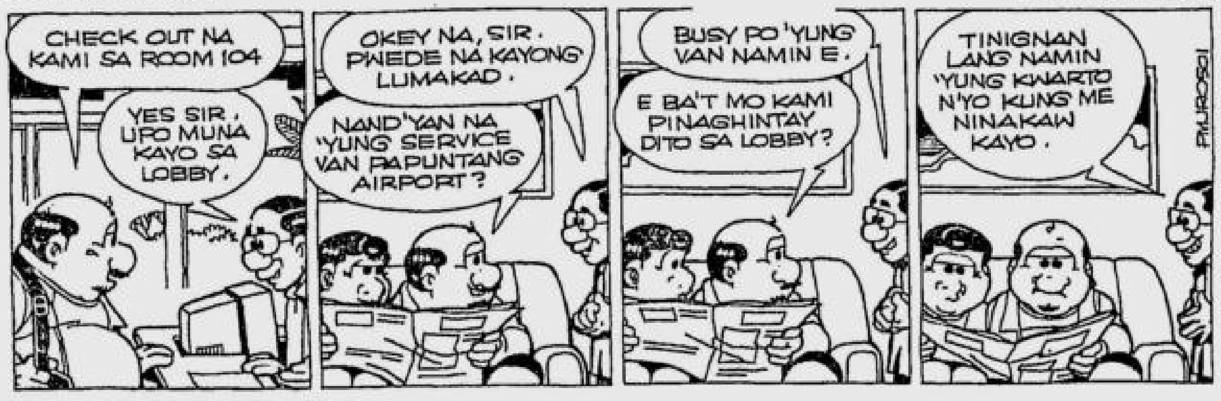
4-18

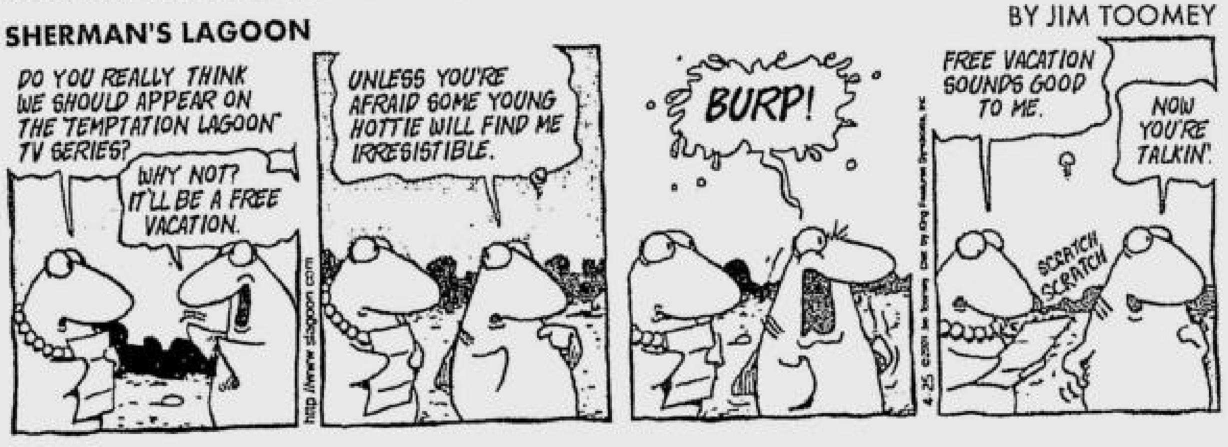
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


CHECK OUT NA KAMI SA ROOM 104
YES SIR. UPO MUNA KAYO SA LOBBY.
OKEY NA, SIR. PWEDE NA KAYONG LUMAKAD.
NAND'YAN NA 'YUNG SERVICE VAN PAPUNTANG AIRPORT?
BUSY PO 'YUNG VAN NAMIN E.
E BA'T MO KAMI PINAGHINTAY DITO SA LOBBY?
TINIGNAN LANG NAMIN 'YUNG KWARTO N'YO KUNG ME NINAKAW KAYO.

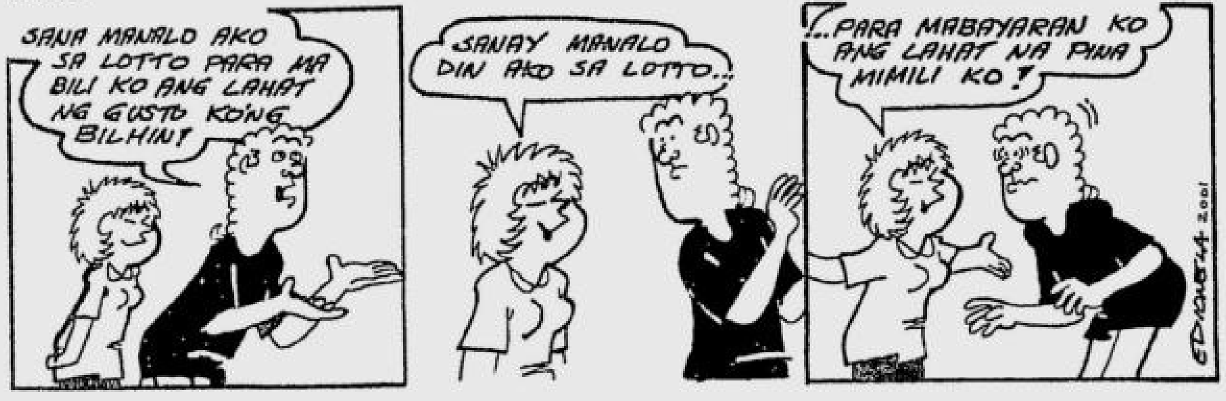
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


DO YOU REALLY THINK WE SHOULD APPEAR ON THE 'TEMPTATION LAGOON' TV SERIES?
WHY NOT? IT'LL BE A FREE VACATION.
UNLESS YOU'RE AFRAID SOME YOUNG HOTTIE WILL FIND ME IRRESISTIBLE.
BURP!
FREE VACATION SOUNDS GOOD TO ME.
NOW YOU'RE TALKIN'.
SCRATCH SCRATCH
http://www.slagoon.com
4-25

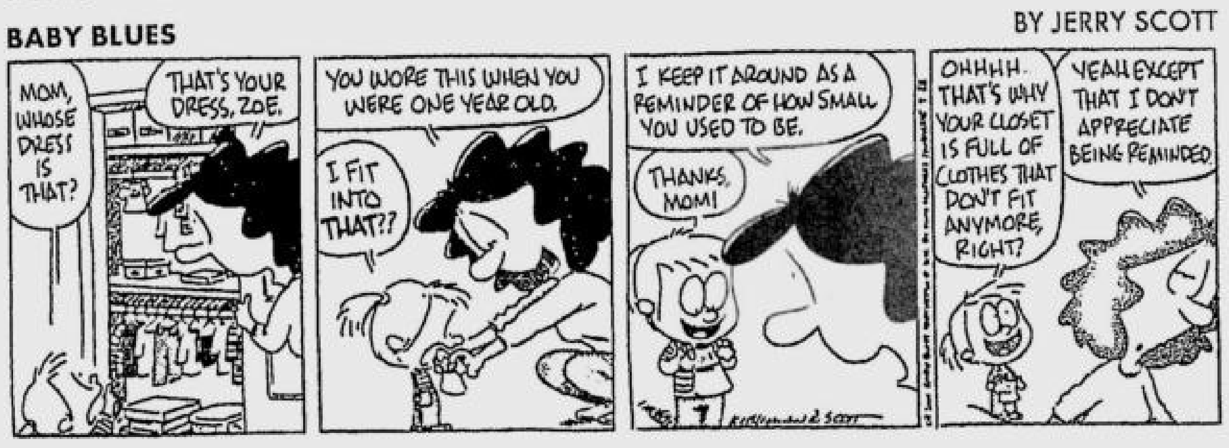
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


SANA MANALO AKO SA LOTTO PARA MA BILI KO ANG LAHAT NG GUSTO KONG BILHIN!
SANAY MANALO DIN AKO SA LOTTO...
...PARA MABAYARAN KO ANG LAHAT NA PINA MIMILI KO!
EDIONELA 2001

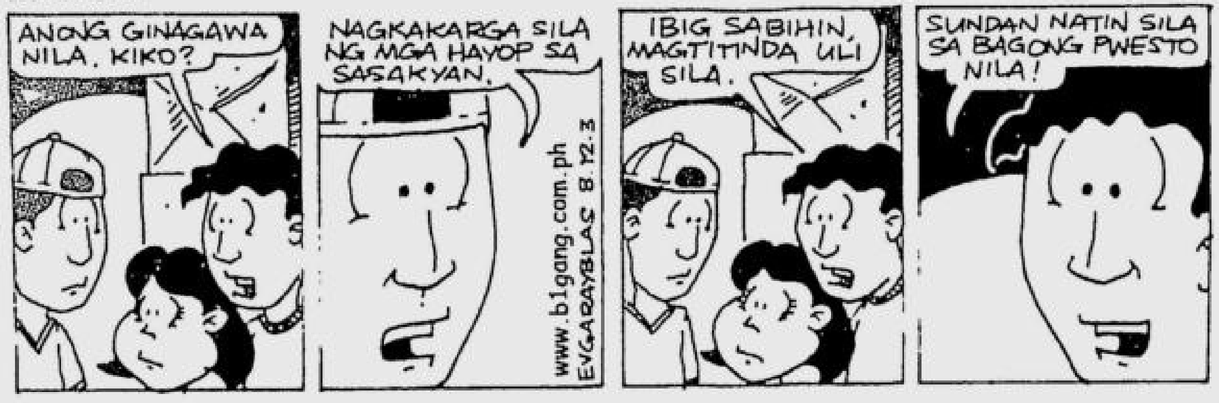
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


MOM, WHOSE DRESS IS THAT?
THAT'S YOUR DRESS, ZOE.
YOU WORE THIS WHEN YOU WERE ONE YEAR OLD.
I FIT INTO THAT??
I KEEP IT AROUND AS A REMINDER OF HOW SMALL YOU USED TO BE.
THANKS, MOM!
OHHHH. THAT'S WHY YOUR CLOSET IS FULL OF CLOTHES THAT DON'T FIT ANYMORE, RIGHT?
YEAH, EXCEPT THAT I DON'T APPRECIATE BEING REMINDED.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


ANONG GINAGAWA NILA, KIKO?
NAGKAKARGA SILA NG MGA HAYOP SA SASAKYAN.
IBIG SABIHIN, MAGTITINDA ULI SILA.
SUNDAN NATIN SILA SA BAGONG PWESTO NILA!
www.b1gang.com.ph
EVGARAYBLAS 8.12.3

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Scatman Crothers, Rosemary Clooney, Joan Collins, Anatoli Karpov, Jewel, Drew Carey

Happy Birthday: It's time for new beginnings. Take what you've learned in the past, refocus and decide what you really want to accomplish. Once your vision is clear, the rest will come easy. Your enthusiasm and knowledge will lead to success. Lay your cards on the table and make positive moves. Your numbers: 3, 19, 25, 33, 38, 45

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Delays due to transportation difficulties may cause a snag in your plans. You must act quickly if you want to meet your deadlines. Don't hesitate to ask for favors. You have more allies than you think.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Doors will open professionally if you send out your resumé and go for interviews. Don't let children or entertainment cost too much, or you'll have financial problems.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You'll be indecisive today. Your romantic partner will be confused by your actions. You'll have to be careful that you don't make rash decisions you'll regret later.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't reveal secret information about others. Co-workers won't be willing to cooperate with you, and you'll have to accomplish projects on your own.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Your colorful way of doing things will attract attention. You need to use up your energy in a constructive manner. Check out activities that offer a physical challenge.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Work diligently on projects requiring fine detail. Avoid peers who want to drag you into their dilemmas. You may want to help them, but you'll get blamed for the outcome.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Check out some of the courses offered in your community. You need to start learning new skills if you want to keep up with the never-ending technological changes at work.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't overspend on those unworthy of your generosity. You may want to look into the nature of an organization before you donate or join it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Your lover may not be sure of your intentions. You can evade the issue as usual by being affectionate, fun loving and too active for your mate to catch on.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You should be thinking about a career move. Someone you work for is probably trying to hold you back. Protect your reputation and prepare yourself for unexpected changes.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You need to socialize with colleagues. If you can combine some work with pleasure, you will gain respect and help from those in a position to help you get ahead.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Emotional blackmail will only get you into trouble with your loved ones. You need to make some personal changes in your life. Don't blame others for your own unhappiness.

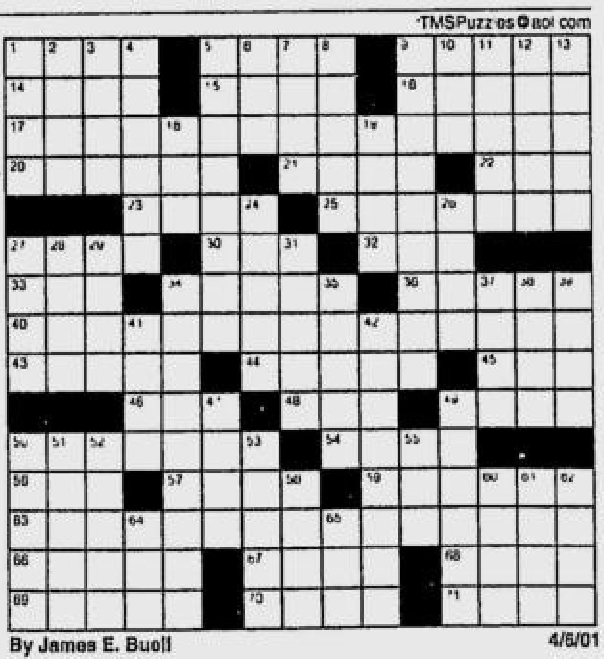
Birthday Baby: You love to converse with everyone and are always in search of knowledge. You are agile, free-spirited and quick to respond. You have a strong desire to interact intellectually and creatively.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com

ACROSS
1 Lone attendee
5 Horse do
9 Rho-tau separator
14 Words represented by a colon
15 Fiery gemstone
16 Goofed
17 Take a dive?
20 Unimportant thing
21 Lovebirds words?
22 Domino dot
23 Revise for print
25 It's not a problem
27 Will VIP
30 Real profit
32 Sch. group
33 Helping hand
34 Stand-in
36 Was sore
40 Hit the dirt
43 Cafeteria dessert
44 Pits
45 Asian gazelle
46 Elect (to)
48 Zeta follower
49 Bouquet
50 Laborious
54 "Rule Britannia" composer
56 Indonesian island group
57 Molecule maker
59 Violinist Georges
63 Behave more underhandedly
66 Top room
67 Hawaiian island
68 Israeli airline
69 Egyptian god of wisdom
70 Sty fare
71 Long-gone bird

DOWN
1 Process flour
2 Russian ruler
3 Gudrun's victim
4 The shark or Tiger
5 Take up occupancy
6 Primatologist's subject
7 Drug cop
8 "Rocket Man" rocker John
9 Dates headliners?
10 Collection agcy.?
11 Bellyache
12 News source
13 Expert
18 Ancient
19 Embroidery ring
24 Pearly whites
26 Baylor U. site
27 Pilgrimage to Mecca
28 Hibernia
29 Rocker Billy
31 Lake near Reno
34 Timekeeper's clock
35 River's end
37 Writer Victor
38 Eve's grandson
39 6/6/44
41 Trudge
42 Made ready
47 Dorothy's dog
49 Chirped
50 Attacks
51 Math subj.
52 Approach quickly
53 Taboos
55 Compass dir.
58 Ground grain
60 Town near Caen
61 African nation
62 European capital
64 Caboodle's partner?
65 Which person



By James E. Buell
Edgewater, FL

4/6/01

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

A	F	A	R		M	E	D	I	C		S	K	I	D
N	A	M	E		A	R	E	C	A		P	E	S	O
T	W	O	S	L	E	E	P	Y	P	E	O	P	L	E
I	N	S	T	I	N	C	T		S	U	I	T	E	S
				V	A	T		G	I	R	L			
R	O	A	M	E	D		B	O	Z	O		O	R	E
A	S	S	A	I		A	L	O	E		A	L	E	X
W	A	K	I	N	G	N	E	D	D	E	V	I	N	E
E	K	E	D		U	T	E	S		N	E	V	E	R
R	A	D		S	L	E	D		S	O	R	E	S	T
			S	A	L	S		E	M	U				
A	N	G	O	R	A		D	R	A	G	R	O	P	E
L	U	L	L	A	B	Y	I	N	R	H	Y	T	H	M
I	D	E	A		L	E	G	I	T		A	T	O	M
T	E	E	N		E	S	S	E	S		N	O	N	A

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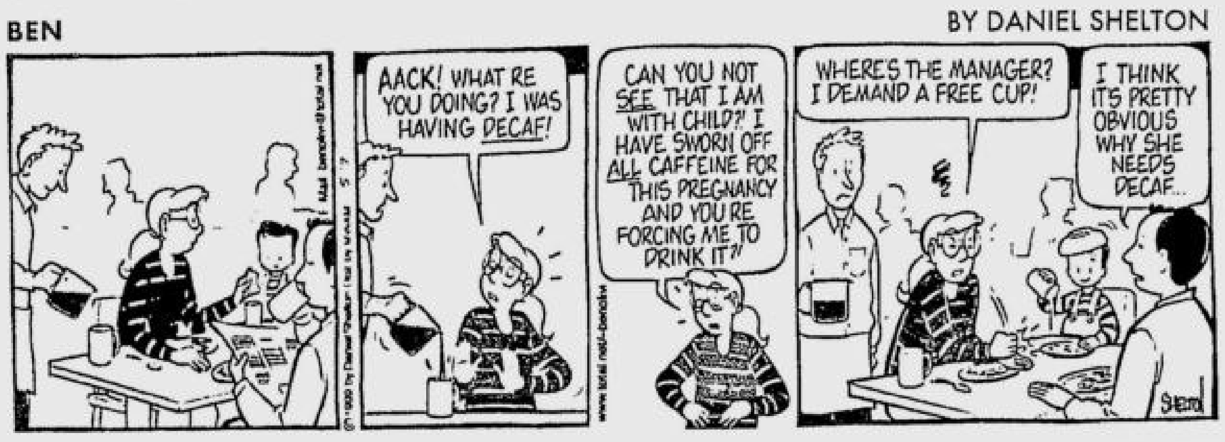
4/5/01

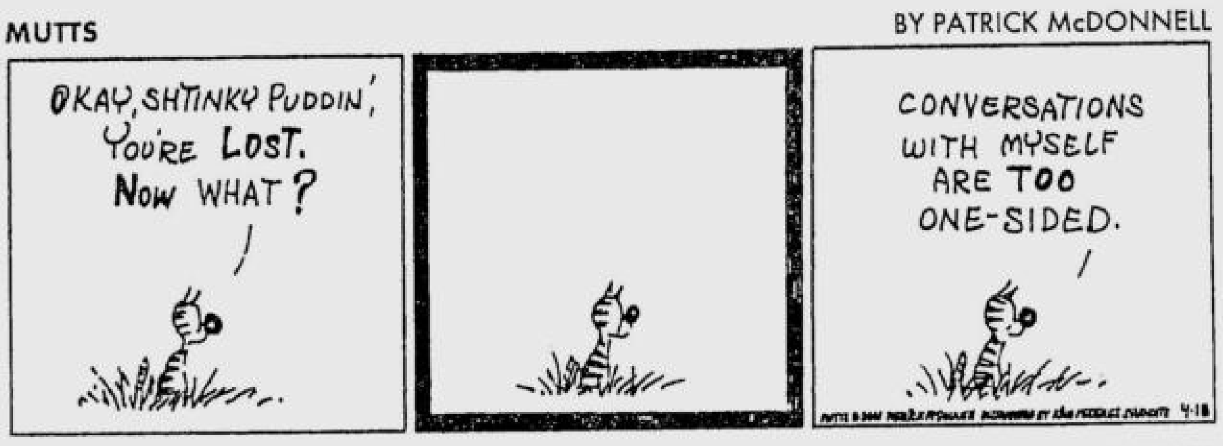
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


AACK! WHAT RE YOU DOING? I WAS HAVING DECAF!
CAN YOU NOT SEE THAT I AM WITH CHILD?! I HAVE SWORN OFF ALL CAFFEINE FOR THIS PREGNANCY AND YOU'RE FORCING ME TO DRINK IT?!
WHERE'S THE MANAGER? I DEMAND A FREE CUP!
I THINK IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS WHY SHE NEEDS DECAF...
SHELTON

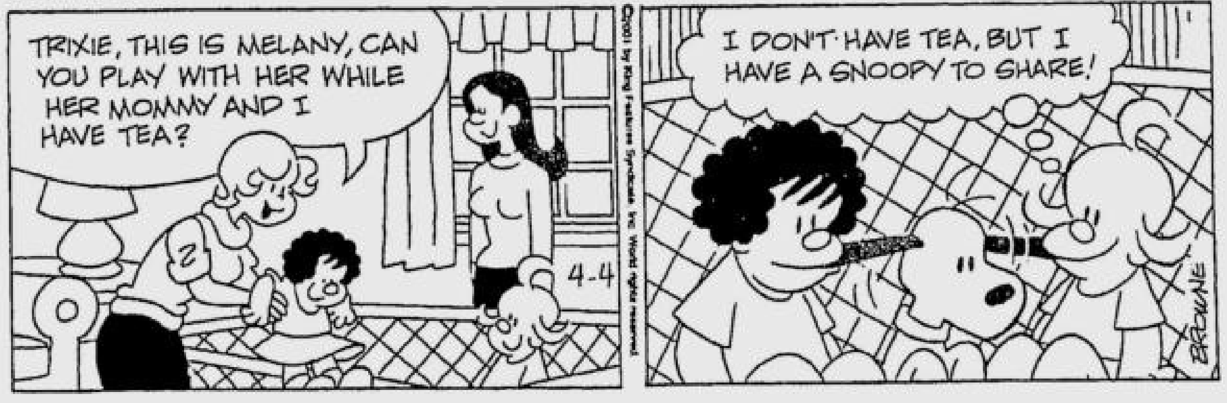
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


OKAY, SHTINKY PUDDIN', YOU'RE LOST. NOW WHAT?
CONVERSATIONS WITH MYSELF ARE TOO ONE-SIDED.
4-18

HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


TRIXIE, THIS IS MELANY, CAN YOU PLAY WITH HER WHILE HER MOMMY AND I HAVE TEA?
4-4
I DON'T HAVE TEA, BUT I HAVE A SNOOPY TO SHARE!
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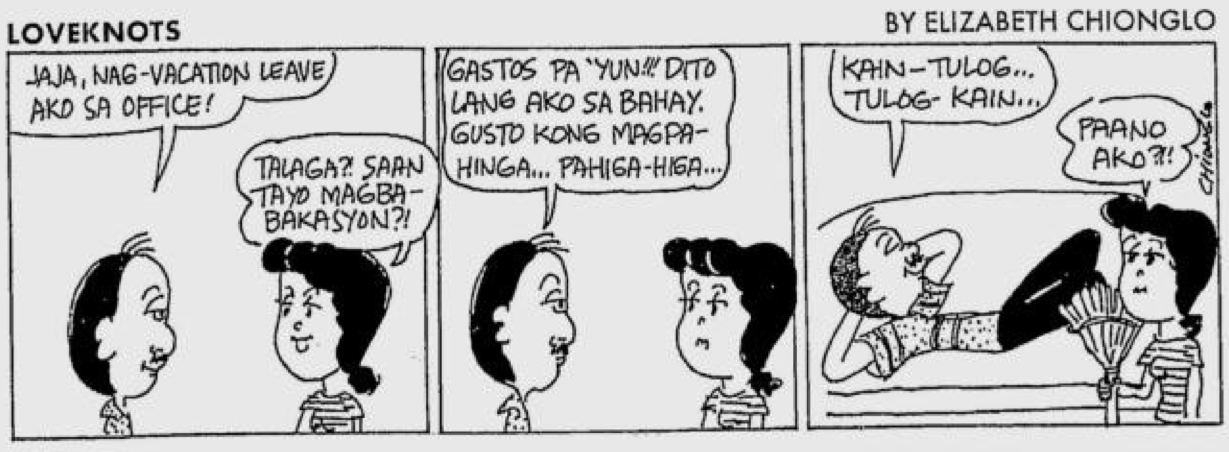
BROWNE

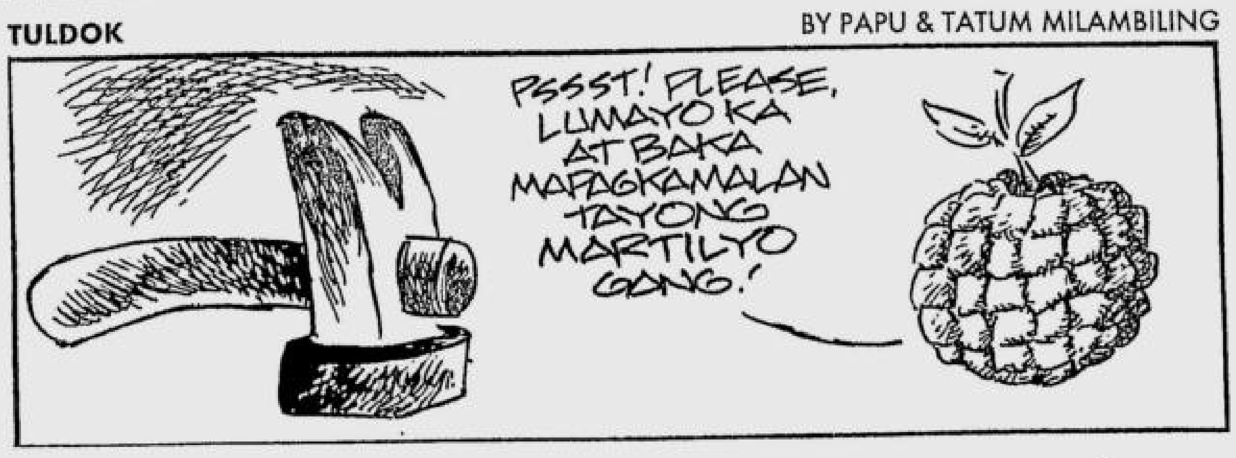
LOVEKNOTS

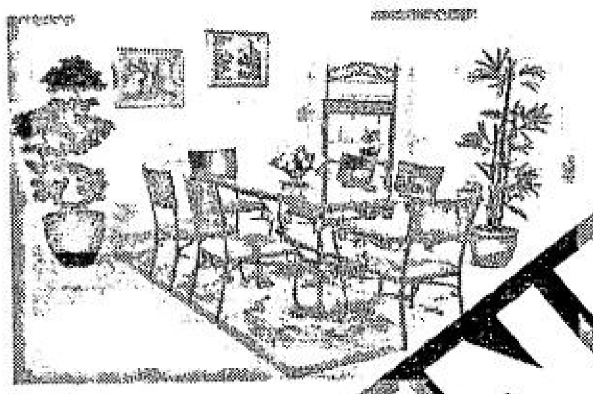
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

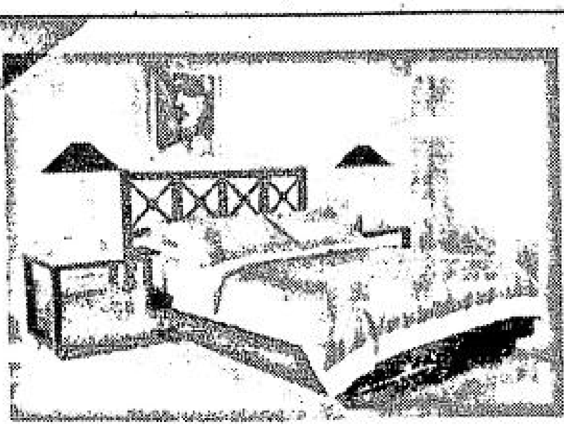
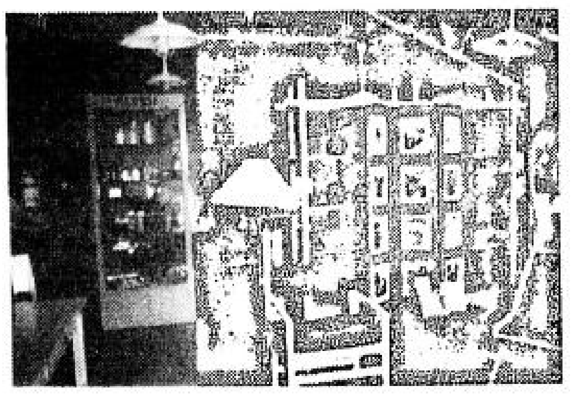
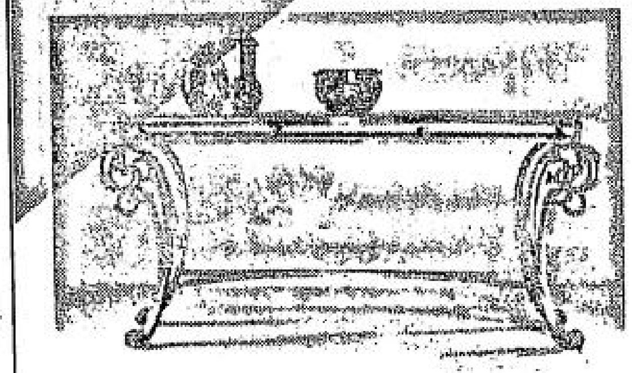
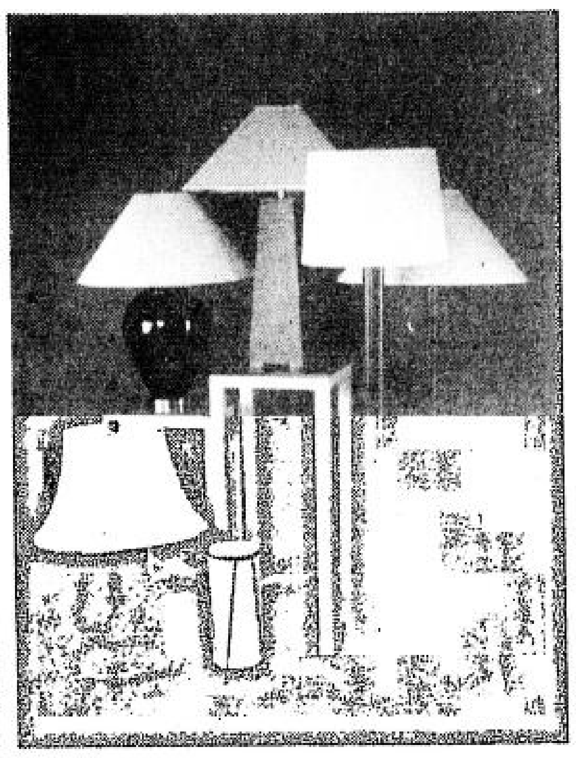

JAJA, NAG-VACATION LEAVE AKO SA OFFICE!
TALAGA?! SAAN TAYO MAGBA-BAKASYON?!
GASTOS PA 'YUN!!! DITO LANG AKO SA BAHAY. GUSTO KONG MAGPA-HINGA... PAHIGA-HIGA...
KAIN-TULOG... TULOG-KAIN...
PAANO AKO?!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


PSSST! PLEASE, LUMAYO KA AT BAKA MAPAGKAMALAN TAYONG MARTILYO GANG!



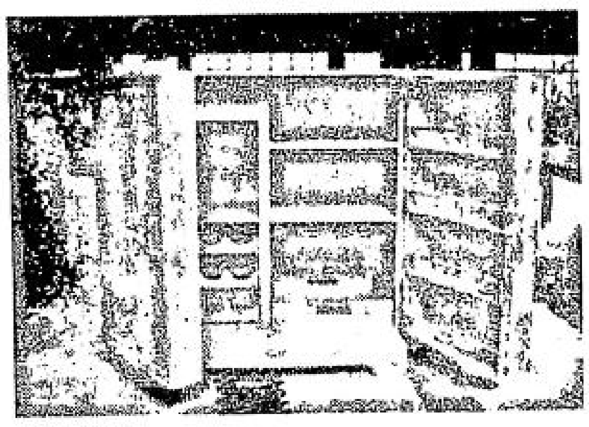
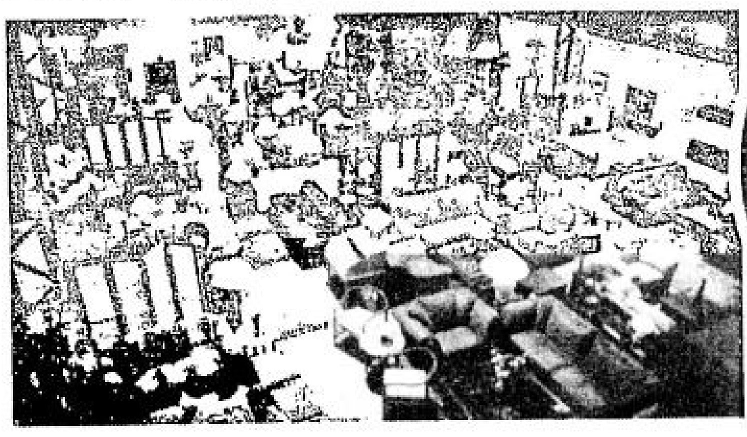
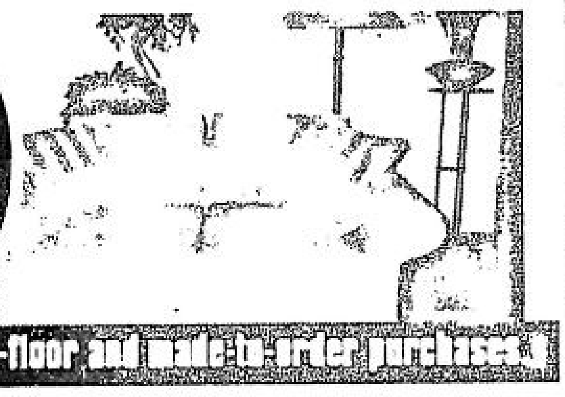
EXTENDED!

UP TO MAY 31, 2001! *

Celebrate Our Birthday With Us.

26th Anniversary SALE

May 18 to 23, 2001, 10a.m. to 7p.m.

up to 50% off on all off-the-floor and made-to-order purchases.

We've been making beautiful, high-quality furniture for 26 years. And don't be surprised if most of the pieces we made 26 years ago are still around today--a testament to the quality craftsmanship and the endearing designs Habitat has become known for. This year, we welcome you to our 26th anniversary sale. We'll give up to 50% off on all off-the-floor and made-to-order pieces. Don't miss it!

Designs for Life

Habitat 26 years

LIFESTYLE CENTER

Pines cor. Sheridan Sts. Mandaluyong City Tels. 636-4115 / 636-5141 Fax 634-0865 • e-mail: habitat@pacific.net.ph

* Approved by DTI
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-236, Series of 2001

Who mOVes you the mOst?

Pick the 6

COTTON USA

MOVING spirits

Jude Eustaquio, 13
Golfer
"I know I need to share and inspire teens like me to get into sports. Someday, I want to be one of the top golfers in the PGA Tour."

Chris de Lima, 18
Archer
"Archery teaches focus, cooperation, and responsibility. These are the real prizes."

Kim Kwok, 14
Opera singer
"If you can sing opera, you can sing just about anything else, like pop. But if you just sing pop, you can't sing opera."

Miggy Yam, 6
Soccer player
"I practice hard and do my best because I want to be like Pele."

Mazie Cajucom, 16
Actress
"I was never shy. I always wanted to perform. I believe that if you really want something, don't be afraid -- go for it."

Mich Dulce, 19
Fashion designer
"Everything around me, the people I meet, and the journeys I embark on become the inspiration for my work and craft."

Hans Dimayuga, 12
Actor
"On stage, lessons are learned, pesos are earned. Great! But the best part comes with... the curtain call!"

Celine Guillermo, 6
Painter
"I love to paint. When I grow up, I want to be a painter, ballerina and a doctor."

Pauline Baniqued, 14
Writer
"I have always felt that in a string of words is a power that touches souls, and can heal those who have been terribly hurt."

Mariel Alfonso, 12
Ballet dancer
"Dancing teaches discipline. It taught me to focus, to develop my skills. It taught me how to balance both my studies and ballet."

Cara Damian, 5
Ice skater
"I like to feel the wind on my face. I like the feeling when I'm gliding."

Paolo Bagaman, 10
Honor student and leader
"My intelligence will help me persevere in helping my parents and my country. I want to be president someday."

Buy COTTON USA and Breeze products, then pick the 6 and get a chance to win really moving prizes!!!
1st prize... Sony Home Entertainment System
2nd prize... 4 days and 3 nights in BANGKOK (for 2) plus pocket money
3rd Prize... 10 Sony Discmans and more!

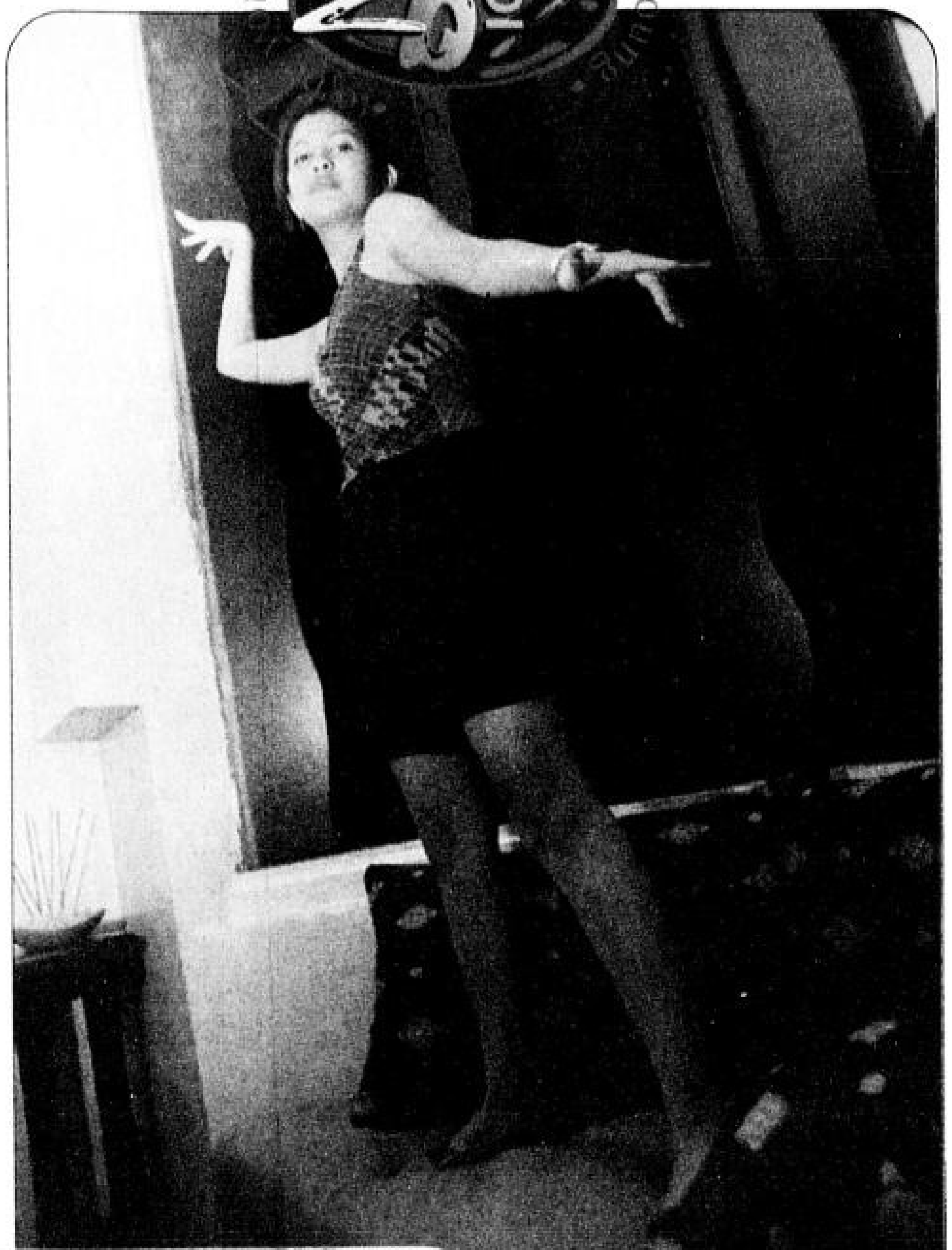
That's the spirit.

In cooperation with:

See posters and flyers for the rules of the vote and raffle. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0355, Series of 2001.

MABEL Reyes

Les girls in this 2bU! fashion shoot can give professional models a run for their money



CARMELA Cafuir

Playing dress up

By Jules Alcantara

ART DIRECTION AND PHOTOS BY MIKE ALQUINTO

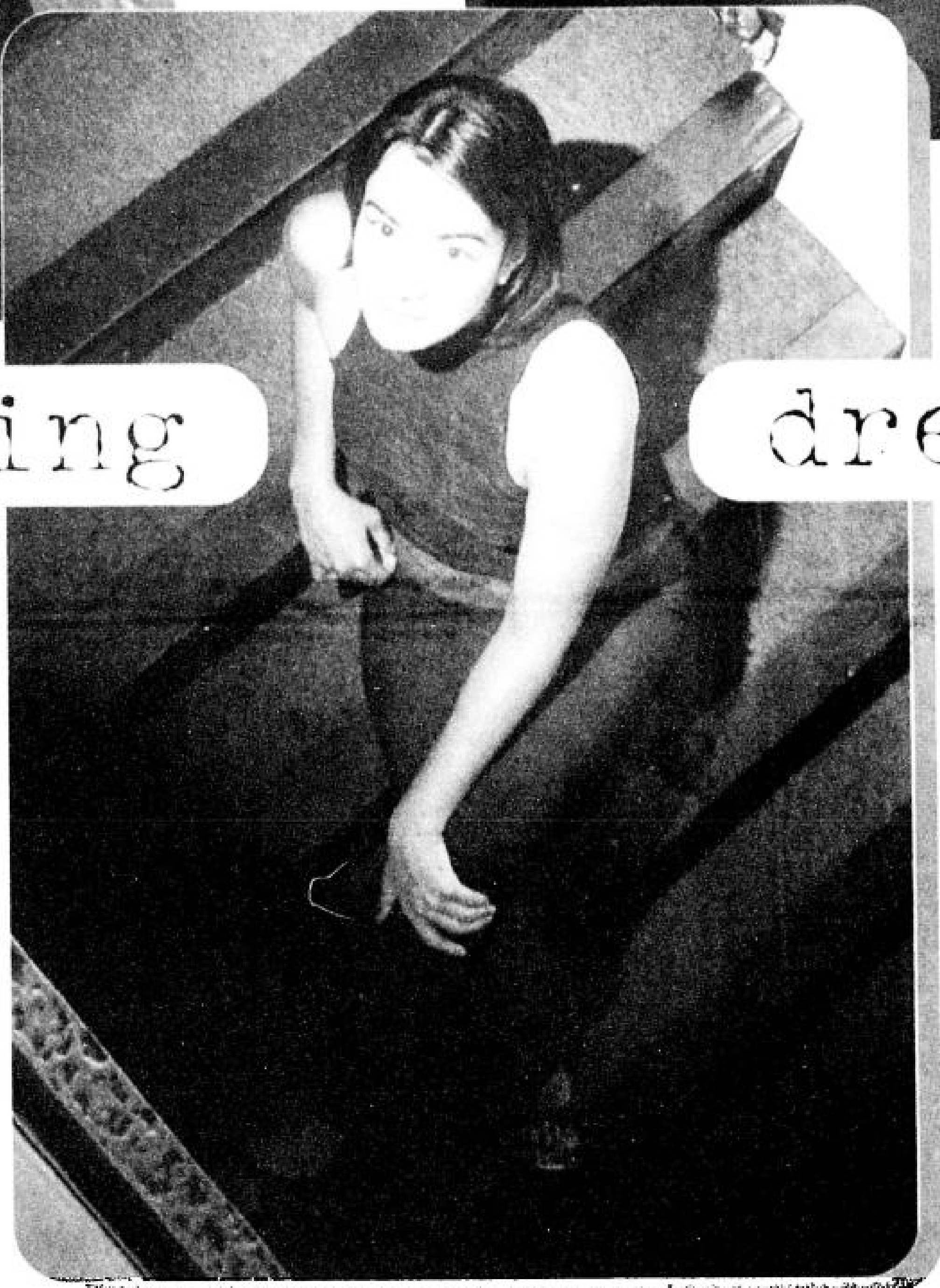
EVERYTHING happens for a reason, they say. But to certified control freaks, this truism didn't help soothe frayed nerves at all. 2bU!'s resident stylist, Happy David, and yours truly were in varying degrees of panic as we attended to the different logistical needs for the shoot. We *were* going to have a girls' pictorial—and you know girls are... uhmm... complicated, to say the least. Happy and I should know—the way we agonized over everything to the minutest details, one would think we were discussing the agenda for a foreign invasion.

But our panic was all for naught. Everything went quite well during the shoot. The girls looked like they were born to wear the beautiful Urban&Co. clothes. No one would have thought these girls lived in their jeans and tank tops.

Po Na Na, Manila's newest haven for night owls, was such a sight to behold the girls could not help but be inspired to pose and preen. The girls were definitely glamour personified that we had to remind ourselves the pictorial was for 2bU!, and not for some glossy fashion magazine.

Girls love playing dress up—it is a weakness they picked up in childhood. And a night out is always a good excuse to play glamour queen.

For this week's pictorial, none of the girls was a professional model. But who would have thought, right?



DIANE Quisumbing

JOAV Batulan

CARISSA Chan

CLOTHES BY URBAN&CO.
STYLING BY HAPPY DAVID
SHOES BY JANYLIN
LOCATION: PO NA NA, LIBIS, QC

Hallmark
WAVE 89.1
www.wave891.fm
2bU! To be you!
Lifestyle Teen Section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer

The Between You and Me "Cardspeak" Contest!

Our love is
more than you and me,
it's "us"- that special something
which we create together.
Our love is,
confiding in each other,
sharing our deepest secrets
and trusting completely.
Our love is...
learning who we are
and what we have to give,
so we can bring out
the best in both of us.

THIS WEEK'S WINNER!

inside:
Our love is...growing closer,
knowing the joy of being together,
of living for each other,
and sharing the happiness it brings.
Our love is everything to me.

My boyfriend, Melvin, and I have exchanged dozens of **Between You and Me** cards through the years. I've always loved these cards because whenever I get to read one at the bookstore, it feels like the message was written just for me and my special someone.

Melvin gave this particular card to me while we were on the Mt. Samat ferry trip back to Bataan. We were both tired and cranky, so I was really surprised when he handed it to me. I smiled, but when I started reading, I just couldn't stop the tears from falling. And it's not just because he was leaving for Canada in two days--for good. Something in this card evoked a thousand emotions from me. I cried and cried, not caring about the strangers around us. It made me realize that yes, we'll be parting ways, but we have our love to keep us together. It made me look back on how far we've come, and I'm really thankful for having such a nice, sweet and smart boyfriend like him.

I realized how special our relationship is. There's something magical about sharing my life with someone who believes in me and accepts me for who I am. There's no longer a YOU and a ME but an US. This feeling of oneness was confirmed by that simple and sweet **Between You and Me** card. I'm glad the affirmation came from him. It made me forget about the uncertainties of the future because now I know it's up to us and our love to keep us together.

- Rosalie R. Julco
46 Consunji Subd.,
Lati Orion, Bataan 2102

HURRY! THERE'S STILL TIME!

You can still make it to *Hallmark's Between You & Me "Cardspeak"* Contest! Send us the most memorable Between You & Me card you received and tell us why it's "senti" in 300 words or less. If your entry is chosen, your story will be printed in this section of *2bU!*. And if that's not enough, you also get to win two cool *Swatch* watches! (That's one for you and one for the person who sent you the card). Mail your entries to: *Filstar Distributors Corporation 3/F Team Pacific Bldg. 13 Jose Cruz St., Ugong, Pasig City 1604.* Include your name, address & contact number. Contest ends June 13, 2001. So keep 'em coming! Catch *Joe D'Mango's Love Notes* every Friday (10:00 am) at *WAVE 89.1* as he reads your favorite Between You & Me cards and every Sunday in the Inquirer's Lifestyle section.

www.hallmark.com

Congrats, Rosalie!
You and Melvin won this!

swatch
lifting (GK 912)

2bU! to be young • to be you • To be you!

On cross-cultural relationship problems

September Mahino & Carlos Garchitorena

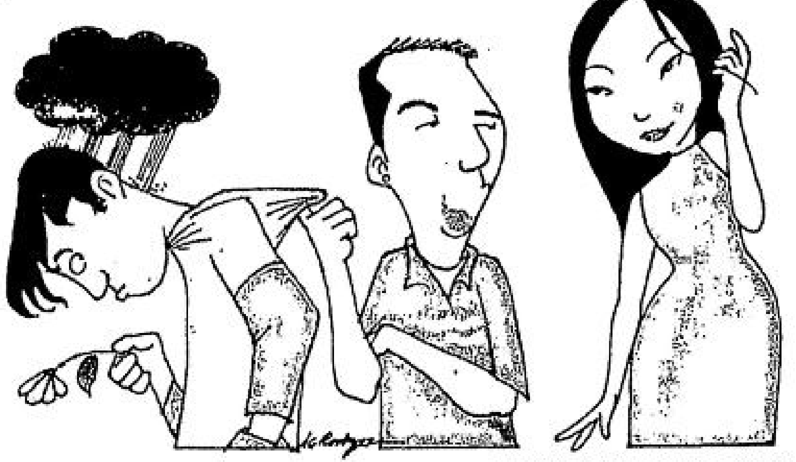


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

DEAR Sep and Caloy,

This is in reaction to Beans' letter regarding her Chinagirl.

Yeah, I agree with Sep that Beans' persistence is really admirable (if not questionable?). There's nothing he can do unless he gets to make Chinagirl like him first, enough for her to go against what is convenient. Simply put—something Sep tried to say but cannot go about it directly—Chinagirl just doesn't like Beans enough. Okay, let's be kind, doesn't like enough yet.

Still again, and this is for Beans, what's the point in crying out loud if he himself says it's just a date? I think the letter is a simple "*pa*-cute" and a "*pa-kawa-wa-naman-akong-naaapi*" effect, with the ethnic issue just thrown in for dramatics. Come on, man, get real! You don't need to go out on a formal date just to let Chinagirl know of your intentions. Try to be more creative instead of wallowing in aggrandized self-pity. Get to work!

I do not really go with Caloy's approach in simply dismissing the ethnic issue as a non-issue. Discrimination is real and it works both ways. I am Filipino through and through and as "*askal*" as one comes, but since I carry a Chinese-sounding family name I am being discriminated against by being tagged Chinese, an outsider to the national mainstream. That's painful. Imagine applying for a passport with your father and grandfather's Filipino passport on hand and the guy at the front desk dismisses you and says that you should get an ACR instead. And I bet you've heard the slur "*Intsik-beho-tulo-laway*" singsong. That sucks. Yes, Filipinos are generally "chinophobic," and this runs all the way to the "Limahong scare" days.

One cannot just invalidate attempts at self-preservation of a society that feels discriminated against. The Filipino-Chinese, ah, well, what else can I say, but have you ever heard of the term Filipino-Spanish, or Filipino-Mexican? Fil-Am is really more of a PBA terminology.

Anyway, more power to you both. Just to add some spice, I'm signing my letter as...

BLACK BEANS

A backgrounder: Beans was in love with a girl who put a stranglehold on their relationship kung-fu style. Citing parental umbrage, the girl parried Beans' moves with the effective Ma-ma grip. Too distracted by the girl's adorable assertion, he was unable to deflect. He could've countered with the Lame Duck stance and then could have gotten under her defenses with a Possum Overkill but, alas, he was quickly disheartened and dispatched.

Is there a great discrimination against Chinese immigrants in the Philippines, and can it be said that it is exclusive to Chinese? Indians, blacks, even our own indigenous peoples are discriminated against due to the fact that they bring their culture to the mainstream, yet refuse to join the mainstream themselves. Even though society in general may benefit in a diverse culture and flow of capital investment (micro-lending or 5-6), Filipinos, being "humorous" will generally take a snipe at the 5-6 guy or at the black, 6'5" import. Do Filipinos do this because they are envious, perhaps being have-nots or have-less (financially or physically)? Or would the notoriously hospitable Filipino integrate with foreigners had these foreigners been just a little more understanding of our need for *pakikisama*?

Discerning for certain the reason social groups like ultra-traditional Chinese refuse integration might be a game of "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?" Who turned xenophobe first? The onion-skinned Filipino or the tunnel-visioned Chinese immigrants? What should be the strength of a group, its bond between neighbors or building high walls lest the outsiders invade?

Endless hypotheses aside, this cycle of "self-preservation" and self-alienation can take only a generation to break out of, and if Beans were true he would not let such a trivial matter obscure his vision of a meaningful and sincere relationship. After all, the grandparents still holding on to "that which makes them truly Chinese" jive will not live forever, and the old guard will have to come down from their post to be buried in Philippine soil, anyway.

Purposeful hint: The Great Wall of China was penetrated not by using sheer force, but by bribing the wall sentries.

INXS: What is a Chinese-sounding name, Black Beans? Jackie Tiyan? Joe Kwan? Either way, Black Beans, I like you already. Here's a guy who finally gives a damn! Maybe the endless jokes in the immigration line drove him to write. Whatever the reason, welcome to the Chatroom, Black Beans.

CALOY

Honestly, I'm stumped. Call me a shallow, self-centered bee-yotch but when I have cross-cultural relationship problems, the problem would either be just me or the other guy and not the interpersonal issues of the whole human race. But I'm not saying that discrimination is unreal and that it doesn't work both ways because it is and it does. I can't relate to your immigration pains but Filipinos with Filipino-sounding family names have their own pains, too, so there.

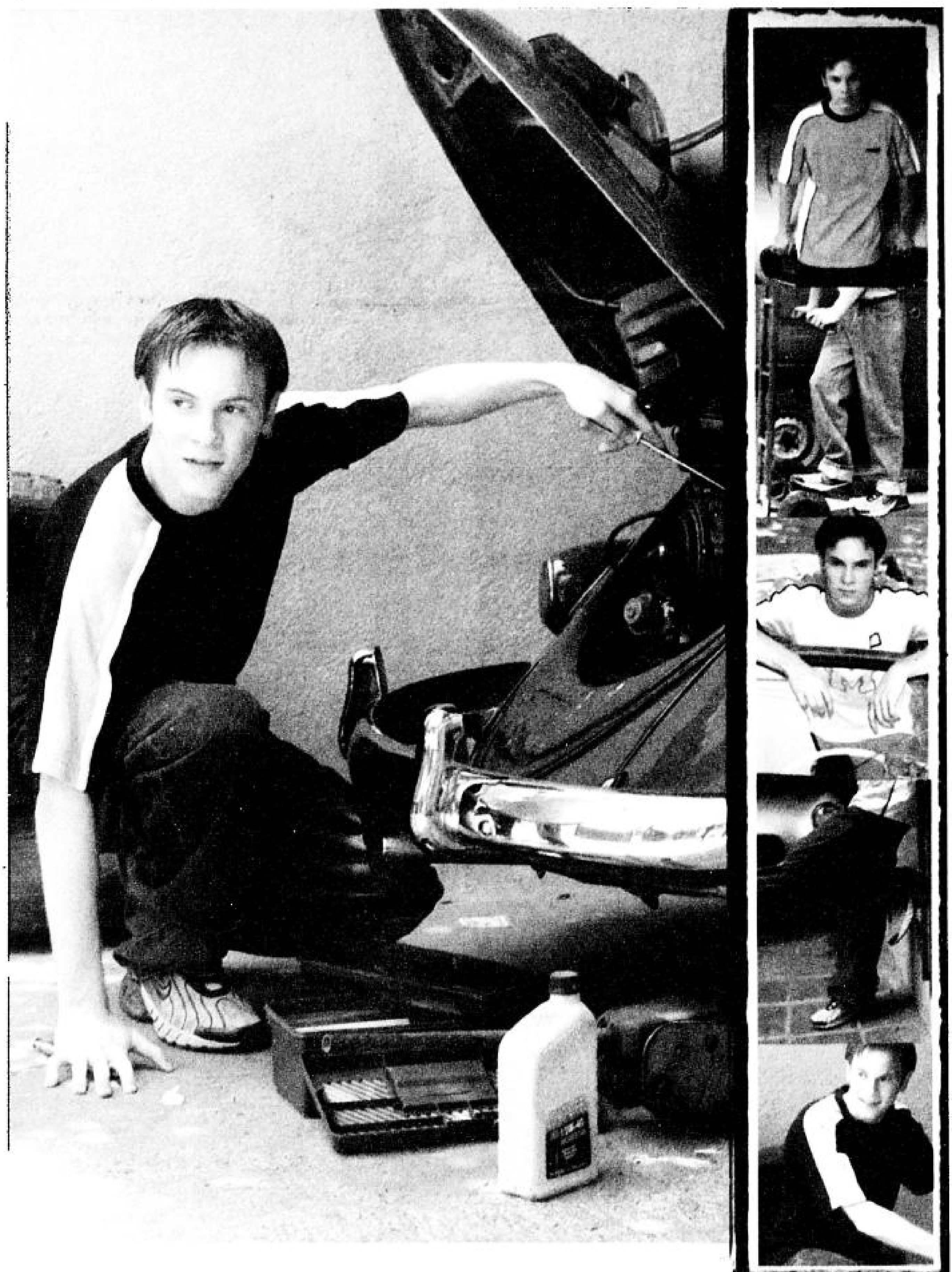
But I don't think discrimination is as present or as virulent today as during the Limahong scare days, whenever that occurred. I think at this age, when tolerance is stressed upon by many, people just use those age-old racist reasons to tell other people off because either they're too ignorant to have their own prejudices or they're too chicken to voice their personal reasons for dislike. Take Chinagirl as your poster child. I don't know about that immigration officer but maybe he just felt like being mean or he was just plain stupid.

Thank you, Black Beans, for a refreshing letter.

It gave me a slight headache, but its rants are authentic.

SEP

E-mail lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph



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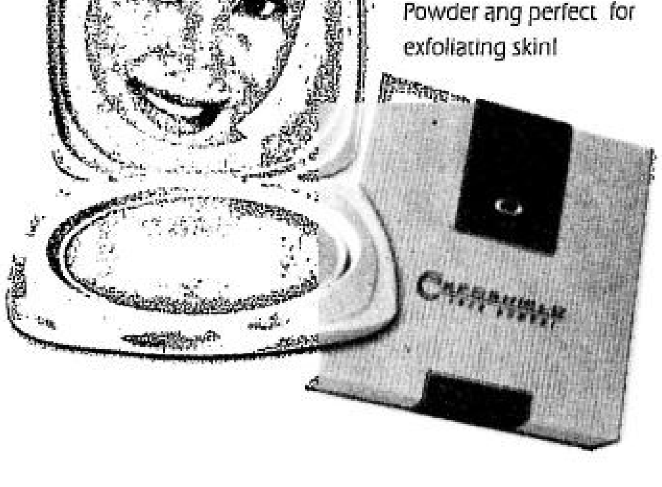

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The heartaches of girlfriend-substitutes

By Pam Pastor

A FEW months back, I met a guy whose emotional and intellectual development was light years ahead of your usual man. Sensitivity, sincerity, passion, kind-heartedness and an overwhelming desire to make the people around him happy—you don't usually get all that in a 23-year-old so, naturally, I was intrigued. Actually, intrigued is hardly the word. All right, I admit. I was bowled over.

The connection was instant—and yes, it's a cliché, but we both felt we had known each other all our lives. Eboy and I became friends. Really good friends. So good that we were actually moving beyond the boundaries of friendship, although we pretended not to notice.

Trapped

We started acting like we were "together," although we both knew he "wasn't ready for a relationship." We talked constantly, texted when we weren't talking, went out. I got to know his family, he got to know my friends—and they loved him.

I tried to keep myself in check, knowing that I was probably bound for pain if I nurtured whatever it was that I was feeling. But my stubborn side refused to listen. Before long, I fell into the same trap I had been in a few times before. I had once again become the girlfriend-substitute.

This role is not an easy one. It means enduring tear-filled nights, confusion and frustration. And the most frustrating thing of all is, despite everything, you can never stay mad at the guy you've fallen in love with. I remember getting myself all psyched up to say goodbye and then having my anger melt at the sound of his voice.

One night, things got really bad. Eyes swollen and face streaked with tears, I went online. And I realized I wasn't alone. To my big surprise, I discovered that all around me were girlfriend-substitutes. Here are some of their stories.

Losing end

Amee, a-23-year-old MA student, has never had a boyfriend. She constantly finds herself involved in pseudo-relationships. "I guess it's because I allow myself to be in that situation. The guys I like either don't want to be in a committed relationship or are involved in long-term ones which they don't want to cut short," she says.

Your usual boy-meets-girl fairy tale has been taken over by a new phenomenon: pseudo-relationships. Let these girls tell you all about it

In the boy-girlfriend sub relationships, everything is involved, except commitment. And Amee knows that she's at the losing end. "He has someone else and all I have is him." And although she manages to stay on, a pseudo-relationship isn't something she recommends. "This arrangement works for some at a given point in time. But most of the time it doesn't. Don't get into one if you can help it."

Scarred for life

"As for me, I am a watercolor. I wash off," Sildz, an 18-year-old UP Diliman student, quoted Anne Sexton when asked to speak of her experience as a girlfriend-substitute.

It was a different case for her. She was the one who was afraid of commitment—she had no idea she'd end up getting hurt in the end. "Last year, this guy courted me. At first, I said no because I didn't want a long-distance relationship and I had a feeling *na nambobola lang talaga 'yung* guy."

But he wasn't one to give up. He continued the pursuit and eventually won her over. "The text messages got sweeter, the calls more frequent. *Parang kami, pero hindi*," she said, echoing the experience of almost every other female who has become a girlfriend-substitute.

"But it was my fault. I didn't want to make things formal. *Ayaw ko ngang magsabi siya ng* "I love you" *para walang* frills. It seemed easier. I was afraid since it would be a long-distance relationship, he'd get to cheat on me or vice versa."

This is a common misconception. Whether there is commitment or not, there will always be the risk of getting hurt, since real feelings are involved.

In the beginning, the set-up seemed to work for them. They even made a deal with each other that they would date other people—and that if someone better came along, the other was free to pursue that relationship. Sildz, blinded by the belief that they were being honest with each other, had no idea the guy was already courting someone else.

"*Ginawa lang pala niya akong* spare tire. When he realized he had a bigger chance with the girl, he dropped me like a hot potato."

But she knows where she stands. "I have no right to lay a claim on the relationship. It was not "real" anyway."

The relationship may not have been real, but the pain was. "I moped for three days. I could not eat, *wala akong gana umalis ng bahay*. It was such a huge shock! The fact that he's with another girl was something I couldn't accept—especially since it could have been me."

Sildz dealt with the pain—and continues to deal with it now. "It hurts a whole lot! Just when I started caring for him, just when I was ready to drop every principle I had against a long-distance relationship, *dun pa siya nawala*."

Despite attempts of her guy to remain friends with her, Sildz made her decision. "I have to keep my pride and my head up. I cut off everything with him. I ignored his e-mails, his text messages, his calls until he stopped all together."

This episode has changed her. "I am free of him, yet the experience still haunts me. I turned down suitors after that. I feel like I can't trust the rest of the male population. Up to now, I'm even more scared of entering a relationship. My friends think I'm a man-hater. I guess I'm just not ready."

One-sided

Twenty-three-year-old Mec had a lot of realizations while watching the movie "Boys and Girls." "I realized that there were a lot of people involved in this kind of relationship." She went online (www.pinoyexchange.com) and started searching for people who were in the same boat.

She enumerated some possible scenarios. "Single girls who spend all their time with their boy best friends, girls who've gotten close to their male friends and have fallen in love, those who fell in love but settled for friendships."

She speaks about pseudo-relationships in a matter-of-fact manner. "People now are getting really scared of commitment or are too lazy to do the dirty work of keeping relationships. The thing that causes pain in these cases is the fact that one wants more. And that has got to hurt, as most one-sided things do."

Underneath this analytical approach is a woman who has also lost a battle to her emotions.

"I have had lots of boy friends but I've been so scared of being a girlfriend-substitute, or him being a boyfriend-substitute for me that I never let any guy be that close to me. I worry that if one of us falls in love with somebody else, the other will be left all alone. Or, heaven forbid—one could fall in love with the other and destroy the friendship in the process."

Despite the precaution, Mec has also become a girlfriend-substitute.

"My most recent experience involved a lot of confrontations—but the guy still won't commit. He's the type who got hurt too deep too young. He's so afraid now to be hurt in that way again." Yet another wonder of relationships. How the present has to pay for the sins of those before them.

"He chooses to control what he's feeling. He chooses to let those he has been hurting suffer—I am the last in the list so far. He chooses not to regret what he has and what he might lose. But he's asking for time," Mec continued.

"I know how he must really feel because we share an affinity. I am here as a close friend for him, Our friendship now has this unwritten clause. We love each other so much and we need each other so much."

"He's sort of given up on love after being hurt. And I can understand him because I gave up on love once. But then I met someone who made me realize what true love is. And after him, I just couldn't give up on love anymore. It's like an obsession—to be that happy, to be that alive again."

But she knows it might not last. "Our hearts can change—and we can say goodbye anytime. I just hope, for myself, I'll do it soon."

When I expressed my wishes for things to work out, or, at the very least, for her not to get hurt if they don't, she answered dejectedly, "Sorry, this one already hurts like hell. Sometimes, I think that's the only reason he's in my life."

Listening to their stories gave me the courage to set things straight. Now I am no longer a girlfriend-substitute. I've become the real thing.

E-mail the author at pammy@exchange.ph

How to tell if you've fallen into the trap

YOU might already be your guy pal's girlfriend-substitute. Here are some tell-tale signs:

- He has become your last phone call—every single day.
- You say "I love you" to each other—but there's no talk of commitment.
- You've stopped entertaining other guys because of him.
- You actually feel guilty about thinking of dating other people.
- Friends are constantly asking about your status and are shocked when you say you're not together.
- People don't believe you when you tell them you're just friends.
- You get sweet, you hold hands, heck, you even kiss but you're not a couple.
- You go out on dates that are disguised as something else.

Pam Pastor

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